AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

CHARACTER and MANNERS

OF THE

FRENCH;

With occaſional OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

ENGLISH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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BRITAN
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THE

INTRODUCTION.

IN order to ſtate, with Certainty and Preciſion, the Nature and Character of the French, it is neceſſary to examine the Progreſs of Literature, and of other Improvements among them, and the Changes thereby effected in their Diſpoſition and Manners.

To do this accurately we muſt diſtinguiſh three remarkable Epochas in their Hiſtory. The firſt commences with the Opening of the ſixteenth Century, after the Revival of Claſſical Learning, and the polite Arts in Italy; from whence they were brought into France under the Protection and Encouragement of Francis the Firſt, Cotemporary

with our Henry the Eighth, a Prince whoſe Temper ſympathized, in many Reſpects, with that of the French Monarch; in Emulation of whom, probably, he not only cultivated, but was alſo no inconſiderable a Patron of Letters. This Æra of Francis the Firſt they call *le Siecle des Savans*, the Age of Learning.

THE ſecond Epocha is marked by the ſplendid Reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, and is eſteemed in France, *le Siecle du Genie*, the Age of Genius.

THE third, which is the preſent, they have thought proper to ſtile *le Siecle du Gout*, the Age of Taſte.

A King whoſe whole Life was filled with ſo much political and military Buſineſs as that of Francis, could not be ſuppoſed to bring Matters to any ſettled Degree of Perfection; and yet, ſo ſedulous were his Endeavours to introduce the Muſes into his Kingdom, that he had the Satisfaction of ſeeing an Application to the Study of ancient Authors firmly rooted among

among his Subjects; many of whom became in his Time, noted through all Europe, for their profound Skill in Greek and Roman Literature. This, with School Divinity, and the Ariſtotelian Philoſophy, together with thoſe Eccleſiaſtical Writers ſtiled the Fathers, were the only Branches of Knowledge then in Vogue.

THIS Æra, therefore, was fertile in Editors and Commentators; and Latin was the Language employed by moſt of the French as well as moſt of the Literati throughout all Europe, during that Period, with very few Exceptions.

FEW, indeed, of thoſe in France who attempted to write in their own, obtained any laſting Credit by it. Their Poets, eſpecially, were the leaſt happy of any in this Reſpect; as may be exemplified in Ronſard and Dubartas, who though Men of Wit, Science, and Genius, made none of theſe reliſhable by their Stile, which is now abſolutely become obſolete and antiquated.

NEITHER, indeed, have Beze and Marot, who tranſlated the Pſalms into French

Metre, met with a Succeſs paralleled to that of Sternhold and Hopkins, who performed the ſame Taſk much about the ſame Time, and ſome of whoſe Verſions pleaſe even at this Day: as do the poetical Works of ſeveral other of our Countrymen in that Age; which is far from being the Caſe of any French Poet then exiſting, if we except a few Epigrams of the above cited Marot, tolerable enough for what the French call *Naiveté*, agreeable Simplicity.

THIS, likewiſe, is the principal Merit of moſt of their Works in Proſe that made their Appearance in thoſe Times; of the Queen of Navarre's Tales, for Inſtance, and divers other Productions of that Sort, wherein France abounded.

CHARRON is more noted for his profound Senſe, and the Satyre Menippée for its Wit, and both for Strength and Vigour than for Gracefulneſs of Stile.

IN this latter Montaigne is far their ſuperior, as well as in that Facetiouſneſs which

which characteriſes his Manner of writing, and that lively expreſſive Turn he has the Talent of conferring upon Thoughts that often have Nothing elſe to recommend them.

THE ſingularity of Genius that diſtinguiſhes Rabelais from all Writers will perpetuate his Celebrity much more than the Merit of his Deiction; which, though ſtrong and energetic, is the very Reverſe of poliſhed and flowing. His chief Praiſe, therefore, is that of being the ſtrangeſt of all Originals the World ever produced.

THERE are no others deſerving of particular Conſideration, excepting Brantome; in whom is found an Elegance and Eaſe unknown to his Cotemporaries, and which have yet many admirers.

THIS Period, however, gave Birth to the nobleſt hiſtoric Genius that ever appeared in France, the illuſtrious De Thou, much better known by his Latin Name Thuanus. But though he wrote the Hiſtory of his own Times in a Stile not unworthy of the Auguſtan

guſtan Age, yet he excelled not in his own Language: wherein the Productions of his Pen ſtill remaining, fully countenance the Opinion, that peculiar Languages, as well as peculiar Subjects and Opportunities, are equally neceſſary for the ſucceſsful Exertion of every Individual's Capacity.

THE firſt French Writers that diſplayed Correctneſs and Eloquence in their Narrations, were Ablancourt and Vaugelas, who flouriſhed many Years after, and belong to the ſecond Epocha: but even they were meer Tranſlators; and it was a great length of Time before any hiſtorical Performance of conſiderable Merit was written originally in French.

DURING this firſt Period, as the Minds of the French Nation received very little further Poliſhing than the bare Intelligence of dead Languages could confer, their Manners ſtill retained a great ſhare of their former Rudeneſs; and the civil Wars, on account of Religion interfering, added a fatal meaſure of Fierceneſs and Cruelty.

THEIR

THEIR genteeleſt Diverſions, which were Tilts and Tournaments, were ſtill conducted according to the antient Spirit of Knighthood, and differed not much, in Point of Danger, from real Combats.

IN the mean while their internal Diviſions were attended with every Circumſtance that could render them truly terrible. Their Battles were fought with ſuch inexorable Fury, that the *Vae Victis*, woe to the Conquered, of Brennus, never could be more applicable than to thoſe that loſt the Day. The moſt horrid Severities were exerciſed on both Sides: and it is impoſſible to read without ſhuddering, the barbarous Exploits of their Chieftains; ſuch Men, for inſtance, as the Baron Des Adrets, whoſe Conduct and Actions remind one of an American Savage, in the perpetration of his Barbarities, much more than of an European Militant.

BUT the whole Syſtem of their Politics was alike, *Dolus an Virtus* Force or Fraud were equally welcome, the Maſſacre of the Proteſtants

Proteſtants, and the Aſſaſſinations of the Guiſes, and of the two Henrys, were all of a Piece.

Such was, for a Time, and a long one too (more than half a Century) the general Turn of the French: nothing Liberal and Generous in their public Tranſactions; where Diſſimulation was accounted the Pinnacle of Policy: and in private Life, a propenſity to Diſſentions and Quarrels, joined with a reſtleſs Thirſt and Proſecution of Revenge that eterniſed Enmity and rendered Foes irreconcilable.

After the troubles of the Minority of Lewis the Thirteenth were ſubſided, and the Government was aſſumed by Cardinal Richelieu, this equally crafty and reſolute Miniſter foreſaw that unleſs the Attention of the People was converted to more agreeable Scenes than they had been uſed to ſo many Years, his Poſt would remain like that of a Turkiſh Viſir, precarious and full of Danger.

In

In Order, therefore, to divert the Storm he had ſufficient Grounds to be apprehenſive would gather on all Sides, he ſet himſelf to work a Change in the Minds of the French Nobility, by inducing them to a cloſer Cultivation of the Belles Lettres than had hitherto been faſhionable: thereby to ſoften their Diſpoſitions, and eradicate that Proneneſs to public and private Broils that rendered the Management of them ſo very difficult a Taſk.

The more readily to effect this Purpoſe he gave the higheſt Encouragement to that kind of Literature which naturally promotes Politeneſs and Feſtivity of Intercourſe; ſuch as Poetry, Romance, and dramatic Compoſitions. In all which he not only acted as a Protector, but even, either through Zeal in the Cauſe, or perhaps through the Vanity of appearing excellent in every Thing (which was his capital Foible) often undertook the Perſonage of Author, wherein he was rather unfortunate.

THERE is a Tradition in France that not to be thought inadequate to the Attempt, he offerred the celebrated Corneille a large pecuniary Gratification for the Right of Authorſhip to his firſt Tragedy *le Cid*; which however this illuſtrious Writer, whoſe Appetite for Fame was greater than for Money, rejected with an Indignation which had like to have coſt him dear; as the Cardinal, actuated by his native Spirit of Revenge, left no expedient untried to ruin him in the Opinion of his Audience; and baſely excited, and in a Manner required and forced the whole French Academy (juſt founded by his Means and Patronage, and whoſe Members were all his Creatures, or at his Devotion) to paſs the moſt unmerciful Judgment on that Play in a Criticiſm yet extant.

BUT his Malevolence was exerted in vain. Notwithſtanding his Credit and Influence, the Public was not to be deterred from doing Juſtice to that exquiſite Performance; which was received with the Admiration and Applauſe ſo fully due to the

beſt

beſt Tragedy that had yet appeared on the French Theatre.

In other Inſtances his Munificence to Men of literary Abilities was truly noble; and he may be juſtly ſtiled the real founder of Taſte and Genius in France; which in in his Time, and through his Endeavours, ſaw the Dawn of all thoſe mighty Improvements that did ſo much Honour to the Reign of Lewis the Fourteenth.

But ſtill a Tincture of their ancient Ferocity characteriſed his Countrymen: whoſe reſtleſs Temper was ever breaking forth on the leaſt Excitation. Not, indeed, in thoſe heroic Struggles againſt Tyranny, and in Favour of that national Freedom and Felicity which were the Objects of our Anceſtors, at that Time, but in pitiful Wranglings for the private Intereſt of ſome turbulent Grandees, whoſe Pride and Arrogance that indefatigable Miniſter had to deal with to his latter Hour.

NOTHING more clearly proves the Difference between the Engliſh and French Nations, than the Commotions that diſturbed France under his Adminiſtration, a Difference that is manifeſted by every eſſential Point of Conſideration.

EVER ſince the Diſuſe, or rather Suppreſſion of the States General in France (exactly correſponding with our Parliaments in England) no other Spirit but that of Selfiſhneſs, animated the Leaders of the many Factions that aroſe, like Hydras, the one from the Extinction of another. It ſeemed as if the Diſſolution of theſe national Aſſemblies had annihilated all Regard for the public Good; which, indeed, was ſo utterly condemned to Oblivion among the Great, that they did not even think it neceſſary to cloak their Proceedings with ſuch a Pretext. And as it was well known that Nothing of that Nature ever entered into their Views, neither did it make any Part of the Motives or Expectations even of thoſe who eſpouſed their Cauſe; ſo completely univerſal was the Degeneracy of the whole Nation.

THE

THE Nobility, Clergy, and *Tiers Etat* (Commons) had, in a Manner, ſhaken Hands together for the laſt Time, in the famous Convention held a little after the Death of Henry the Fourth; wherein the Haughtineſs of the great Nobles and Churchmen ſo far blinded them to their real Welfare that every Step which Chicanery can ſuggeſt was taken to quarrel with, depreſs and vilify the *Tiers Etat*.

BUT theſe might have ſtood their Ground had there not unfortunately been among them many devoted to the Court: whoſe Inſtruments, in all ſuch Aſſemblies, are ever the moſt active, as they have the ſure Proſpect of an immediate Reward; while thoſe who maintain the Rights of the Public are always more luke-warm, from the Nature of their Recompence, which is remote and participated in common with the meaneſt of their Fellow Subjects: whereas the Danger they riſk is levelled at and falls on them alone.

HENCE it happened that finding themſelves deſerted by the Nobility and upper Clergy

Clergy, and by no ſmall a Proportion of their ownBody, the French Commons grew diſpirited and tamely retreated from the Scene of Action; leaving the Clergy and great Men in Poſſeſſion of the State, which they ſoon embroiled: The firſt, by raiſing religious Perſecutions; the others, by embracing every Opportunity of fomenting thoſe Diviſions from whence they hoped to derive any perſonal Benefit. In the mean Time, as Salluſt ſays of the Conſequences of the inteſtine Feuds among the leading Men at Rome, *Reſpublica quæ Media fuerat dilacerata*, the State itſelf was torn in Pieces between them.

Thus France was, during a long Space, rent into Parties, not one of which had the leaſt plauſible Pretext for its Exiſtence.

In the Midſt of ſuch Turmoils, well might the inferior Ranks loſe that Regard for the Common-weal, which they ſaw their Superiors had ſo little at Heart. Well might they, after the Example of the Romans in the Decline of their Republic, attach themſelves ſolely to the Heads of the ſeveral

ſeveral Factions, as they were the only Objects in whoſe Proſperity their own ſeemed included.

HENCE that Facility with which Plots were formed; that Eagerneſs with which they were conducted; and that Precipitancy with which they were brought to a Criſis; Year after Year renewing the old, or producing freſh Conſpiracies; the Deſtruction of the laſt often ſerving from the pertinacity of the Times to lay the Foundation of an other.

SUCH was the Situation of France under what may not improperly be termed the Reign of Richelieu; who had, however, at his Deceaſe, the Satisfaction of ſeeing this rebellious Spirit, in a great Meaſure ſubdued; and of tranſmitting the Reins of Government into the Hands of a Succeſſor every Way qualified to finiſh what he had himſelf ſo ſucceſsfully begun and ſo nearly compleated.

IN Conſequence of the Maxims laid down by his Predeceſſor, the new Miniſter

ſter loſt no Opportunity of extirpating the Root of all theſe Miſchiefs, by diſcountenancing and ſuppreſſing, by every Art and Method, that Fierceneſs and Violence of Temper and Diſpoſition which were their principal Cauſe and Support.

To compaſs this End, ſo neceſſary to the Purpoſes he had in View, he laid himſelf out to diffuſe, as far as he was able, a Gentleneſs of Manners, and a ſmoother Stile of Behaviour than had hitherto been prevalent: With his Friends and Dependants he aſſumed an Eaſe and Complaiſance that were indeed the beſt Ingredients in his Character, and contributed not a little to eſtabliſh his good Fortune: And he acted on all Occaſions with an Air of Affability that not only won him the good Wiſhes, but imperceptibly the Imitation of many; from that almoſt irreſiſtible Impulſe which induces Mankind to copy thoſe who pleaſe them.

THIS was preciſely what he intended by the extraordinary Condeſcenſion he diſplayed indiſcriminately with all People; which

which, in a little Time, produced thoſe Effects he had not unreaſonably promiſed himſelf, and wrought a change among the French that paved a ready Way to all his Deſigns.

Bluntness of Speech and Deportment was gradually baniſhed from genteel Society; and a more ſoft and refined Mode of Addreſs was ſubſtituted in its room. The Word Court became more dignified in Signification and Importance than ever; and meant not only the Seat of Sovereignty and Power, but the Center of all Politeneſs and Elegance; and an *Homme de Cour* was the moſt flattering Epithet an Individual could be complimented with.

The Miniſter who accompliſhed all this, with ſo much Dexterity, was Cardinal Mazarin; a Man the Reverſe in all Things of Richelieu; but who was admirably indued with the Talent of accommodating himſelf to all Characters, and of temporizing in thoſe Emergencies where Patience and Diſſimulation are of more Efficacy than open Force.

These were the Qualities Richelieu foreſaw would prove the moſt uſeful in the

Times that were to follow; and on the Strength of theſe he pitched upon Mazarin to ſucceed him, as one who had Firmneſs enough to adhere ſteadily to the Plan he had formed, and yet had ſufficient Sagacity to inforce it only by ſuch Means as were practicable.

MAZARIN anſwered exactly all theſe ideas, and amply juſtified the Choice that was made of him; a Choice that fully ſhewed the Foreſight and Penetration of its Author.

As Mazarin was a Foreigner, unconnected with any of the great Families in the Kingdom, and was therefore to truſt wholly to his perſonal Endeavours, he clearly perceived that Inſinuation and Flattery were the chief weapons to be imployed in making his way to the Station he aimed at, that of governing France under the Name of an Infant King, and the Regency of a Queen Dowager, who was not a little jealous of her Authority.

BUT, happily for him, being a Stranger like himſelf, and not over confident in any of the Natives, from theſe Reaſons ſhe was the leſs averſe to accept the Aſſiſtance

of

of a Perſon who was intirely to depend upon her good Will and Countenance, for the Enjoyment of a Poſt that expoſed him to ſo much Envy, and raiſed him ſo many Rivals: whoſe implacable Reſentment and Indignation at his Preferment to what they were perſuaded he had not the leaſt Right to expect, he was ſoon convinced of by the moſt dangerous Proofs.

No two Perſons were ever more perfectly calculated for Joint Co-operators in the Enterprizes they took in Hand than the Queen and the Cardinal. As they both poſſeſſed a winning, graceful Deportment, and an ingaging Propriety of Conduct with all who approached them, they ſoon gained a numerous Party of Well-Wiſhers, and quickly ſettled their Power on ſuch a Foundation that all the ſubſequent Troubles were not able to overturn it. And tho' Mazarin was obliged for a while to withdraw, yet it was only to enable her to recall and reinſtate him on a more laſting and firmer Footing than ever.

This Period afforded the latter Scene of expiring Freedom and Patriotiſm which having lain dormant ſince the diſſolution of the

States, already mentioned, awoke, for the laſt Time, in thoſe Meetings which the French call Parliaments, but which are no more than their Courts of Judicature, and therefore compoſed of none but Lawyers and Gownſmen.

As the Decrees of the King's Council are inregiſtered in theſe Courts, it gave them no groundleſs a Pretence to inſpect into the Tenour and Purport of what was transferred into their Hands, to be thus, in a manner, ratified by their Approbation, and receive from their Concurrence the Sanction of Laws: and tho' ſtrictly ſpeaking, the Conſtitution allows them no ſhare in the legiſlative Power, and conſiders them only as Executors of the Laws, yet, as that Conſtitution was now in a great Meaſure ſubverted, the judicious Part of the French Nation ſaw no Impropriety in their aſſuming a Right of which the Court had unjuſtly deprived all other Subjects, that of repreſenting the true State of public Affairs, and laying Grievances before the Throne; and of reſiſting the pernicious Influence of undeſerving Favourites, and the iniquitous Deſigns of wicked Miniſters.

THIS Right, as no other corporate and legal Body of Men remained to claim it, became in the apprehenſion of all ſenſible, impartial People, much leſs the Priviledge, than the Duty of theſe Parliaments to challenge and exerciſe;

IN Conformity to an Opinion ſupported by an incomparable Majority throughout the Nation, it was exerted in a manner that reflected no Diſgrace on the Members of thoſe Aſſemblies; notwithſtanding the Pains taken by venal, puſillanimous, or prejudiced Writers to defame or miſrepreſent them, or to deny the Juſtice and Praiſe due to their Merits.

BUT as the Maxims of Slaviſh Obedience had taken a deep Root, and were ſtrongly abetted and inculcated by almoſt all the Eccleſiaſtics in the Realm, the Oppoſition to Tyranny was not carried on with that concurrent unanimity which had been expected by thoſe who had lead the Way. Neither was it (which was much worſe) attended with that deliberate Intrepidity of Meaſures which alone can ſave a People in thoſe deſperate Extremities that force them to have Recourſe to the Sword;

Sword; which, when once drawn, the Scabbard ſhould be fairly thrown away, and nothing of Timidity or Wavering admitted in their Councils.

THE Reverſe prevailed in thoſe of the French Parliament; which conſiſting of Gentlemen of the long Robe, could not produce thoſe active Champions for the common Cauſe, whoſe perſonal Courage and Vigour are ſo abſolutely neceſſary in critical, deciſive Moments.

THEY who took upon them the executive Part were moſtly Perſons unacquainted with Military Affairs: and who, therefore, could not, with raw undiſciplined Citizens, make Head againſt Regulars led on by expert Officers.

THE Reſult was the total Defeat of all thoſe Intentions which the Friends to Liberty had been forming; and the compleat Eſtabliſhment of the royal Power on the Ruins of every lawful Barrier to Oppreſſion.

As this great Victory was obtained by the Court through the Aſſiſtance of the Military and the Clergy, they reaped of courſe,

courſe, the principal Benefit from this change in the political Syſtem and have ever ſince been held in high Repute by the Government.

NOTWITHSTANDING the ill Succeſs that befel the Popular Party, its principal Chieftain, the celebrated Cardinal De Rets, the capital Actor in the midſt of all theſe Confuſions, and the profeſt, inveterate Antagoniſt of Mazarin, was incomparably the greater Genius of the two.

THIS undaunted Soul of ſo many Factions, excited and kept alive through his Inſtigations and Spirit, was unqueſtionably a moſt extraordinary Man: and had he been leſs actuated by Impetuoſity, and more governed by real Patriotiſm, would have turned out a very bright Character. But as he carried all Things to Exceſs, and was evidently more ingroſſed by his own Views than was conſiſtent in one who pretended to be zealous for the public Good, his Credit gradually declined and became at laſt of no Conſideration.

THE Truth was, that neither he, nor many of his Party, were animated by that enthuſiaſtic

enthuſiaſtic Ardour for Liberty which inſpires thoſe who have been educated under a free Government, and is ſeldom indeed felt by ſuch as have been brought up in the ſubmiſſive Notions incouraged in abſolute Monarchies. It was rather a Hatred of thoſe in Power, and excepting the moſt eminent Perſons in Parliament, few even of thoſe who eſpouſed their Quarrels, had a proper Idea of the Ends for which they had taken up Arms: while the Generality ſeemed to be much more delighted and occupied in turning to Ridicule the moſt ſerious Tranſactions, and compoſing their Chiefs meerly for the Sake of Diverſion.

THUS the Civil War itſelf became at length a Subject of Deriſion, and is at this Time ſpoken of as a ſtrange, wild Fit of Infatuation, that, as the Author of Hudibras ſays. "Made Men fall out they knew not why."

DURING theſe Conteſts at Home, and until the final Concluſion of the long Wars the French had been maintaining abroad, tho' Literature and Taſte were gaining Ground; the Turbulence of the Times

Times was unfavourable to their Progreſs. Mazarin himſelf, notwithſtanding he was a Perſon of finiſhed Breeding, neither poſſeſſed any remarkable Share of, nor in truth, was inclinable to ſet much Value on Scholarſhip, or any Accompliſhments purely intellectual. The Literati, therefore, had little or nothing to boaſt of his Encouragement: and that Edifice which Richelieu had been at ſo much Pains and Coſt to raiſe, was beginning to totter, and the Minds of the French, which the Cultivation of Literature had contributed ſo eſſentially to improve and adorn, were in Danger of relapſing to their former Barbarity, when a new Scene was opened, by an intire Ceſſation of all domeſtic Diſſentions, and what was ſtill of more Importance, the auſpicious Adminiſtration of Colbert.

This truly wiſe and upright Stateſman, tho' he was the Subject of a Deſpotic Maſter, had Honeſty and Diſcretion enough to tread with Firmneſs and Security the Footſteps of the moſt conſummate Patriots.

As

As he clearly perceived the Diſpoſitions of the French Nation were of ſuch a Nature, that, provided the regal Authority were exerciſed with Moderation, they might be as happy as in thoſe Countries where the Conſtitution is free, he zealouſly uſed his Endeavours to render the King's Power as extenſively beneficial to all his Subjects, as it was unlimited; and to derive the moſt ſalutary Effects from the good Management of that which, when ill employed, is the Cauſe of the greateſt Evils.

His patriotic Efforts ſucceeded to the utmoſt of his Hopes and Expectations; and that Part of Lewis the Fourteenth's Reign, over which this great Miniſter preſided, left his People no Reaſon to regret the Loſs of a Liberty, of which few among them had any right Conceptions, and moſt of them did not wiſh for.

Henceforward that Petulance and Reſtleſſneſs of Temper, in regard to public Matters, which had ſo long and ſo lately been the Character of the French *Nobleſſe*, gave Way to an implicit Reſpect and

and Submiſſion to the Crown. This Alteration, as Things were circumſtanced, one may aſſert was fortunate for the whole Community. When Liberty becomes the Privilege of only one Part of the Nation, it ſoon degenerates into the moſt profligate Licentiouſneſs, and throws the reſt into Diſorder: And it is certainly better that a civiliſed People ſhould pay a regulated Obedience to one Head, than become the ſlaviſh Vaſſals of many, whoſe independence is the conſtant Source of Miſchief to all over whom they poſſeſs Juriſdiction. Witneſs the feudal Governments that formerly diſturbed all Europe. Witneſs the fatal Remains of them in Poland: where more Slavery prevails than in any other European State whatever.

It was, therefore, a Happineſs to France, that as the *Nobleſſe* would not ſuffer the *Tier Etat* to enjoy Freedom, they ſhould alſo be deprived of that Remnant of which they had made ſo pernicious a uſe, by perpetually fomenting Diſſentions, and ſetting their Country in a Flame, for the ſake of ſome paltry perſonal Gratification

HERE, then, begins the Second Period of Improvement in France; which to call the Aera of Genius, is ſaying no more than what is due to a People to whom the whole Circle of Arts and Sciences of all Denominations, and of whatever dignifies the Intellects of Mankind, has the moſt eſſential Obligations.

As the many illuſtrious Names that graced this memorable Period are familiar to People of Education, it were needleſs to enumerate the various Branches of Knowledge which were then either brought to perfection, or ameliorated to a high Degree, or the divers Arts which were cultivated with the moſt brilliant Succeſs.

BUT the happieſt Effect of this great Revolution was the Influence this Exertion of the human Capacity had over the Minds and Inclinations of the People in France, by inſpiring them with a profitable Emulation, and ſtimulating them to thoſe Proſecutions from whence a rational Glory and ſolid Emoluments were equally to accrue.

THUS

THUS, from contending in Fields of Blood, laying waſte their own Country, and debaſing themſelves by the moſt diſhonourable Subſerviency to the lawleſs Ambition of their ſeditious Nobles, they were taught to reliſh the Fruits of Peace; to engage in Commerce, and other beneficial Purſuits; and what was ſtill more deſirable, as it tends to perpetuate ſuch a Diſpoſition, to look on the Strength and Stability of Government as the ſureſt Support of private Welfare, as well as of public Grandeur.

GUIDED by theſe laudable Sentiments, they filled every Profeſſion, and every Department of the State and of the Community with the moſt able Incumbents and Proficients. They became ſerviceable to themſelves by their Induſtry, and not leſs to other Nations by their Ingenuity, which it behoves Mankind gratefully to acknowledge, remained, during the Space of many Years, the ſupreme Object of univerſal Applauſe and Imitation.

IT was thought neceſſary to enter into this hiſtorical Detail, in order to account ſatisfactorily

factorily for the pacific Temper and Frame of Mind the French ſtill adhere to with ſo much Conſtancy, that is to ſay, their Paſſiveneſs and Unreluctance in complying with all the Dictates of Government; a Character from which, as obſerved, they once were ſo widely removed; and which could never, probably, have taken Place, but from the very cogent Cauſes abovementioned, that gave ſo effectually a new Turn to that People, and from the moſt contentleſs, turbulent, and factious, have rendered them the moſt pliable and eaſy to rule of any throughout all Europe.

THE Bickerings that of late Years have ariſen between the Court and Parliament do not ſeem to portend any other material Alterations in their internal Politics, than what may operate a Diminution of the Clergy's Power, and a better regulation of that Body, by retrenching ſome of its unneceſſary Branches, and curtailing it of ſundry of thoſe Priviledges that Experience has demonſtrated to be detrimental to the Community. Whence we may infer that as their Conſtitution will probably ſubſiſt on the ſame Footing it is now, the Diſpo-

ſitions of the People will alſo continue as they are at preſent: the latter being, in all Countries, a natural Conſequence of the former.

We may date the Concluſion of this Age of Genius with the Demiſe of its Protector Lewis the fourteenth; after whoſe Time a ſtudious Refinement in all thoſe Arts and Improvements his Patronage had ſo powerfully countenanced became the reigning Paſſion.

As Grandeur and Elegance could not be carried further, the utmoſt Efforts of Ingenuity were exerted, and every Faculty of Invention ſtrained, to introduce a boundleſs Variety into the manifold Productions which Genius and Capacity had already brought forth.

Hence no Care was omitted in the moſt ſedulous and minute Examination of every Subject wherein Fancy could ſtrike out new Forms and Methods; and where the Appearance of Things could not aſſume an Air of abſolute Novelty, no Attention was, however, ſpared to throw in that Difference which is communicated through the Channel of Taſte; a Word that became, as it were,

were, the Motto of the Times, and was univerſally appropriated to all thoſe Embelliſhments that happened to meet with Approbation.

THIS lucky Term was unanimouſly adopted by all who laboured to ſignalize themſelves in any of thoſe Departments where a brilliant Imagination or a Gayety of Fancy had the chief and immediate Direction; and where a ſtriking Diſpoſition of Ornaments was the object principally conſulted.

POETS, Orators, and even Hiſtorians, became ſollicitous to verſify, ſpeak, and write, according to what was called the Standard of Purity and Taſte; and Palaces, Furniture, Equipage and Dreſs, were all regulated by the ſame Teſt.

HENCE an elaborate Luxuriancy of Expreſſion was hunted after in Speech and in Writing; and too often was ſuffered to atone for Barrenneſs of Thought. Hence Decorations were laviſhed wherever the Eye could turn its Attention; and an affected Profuſion of Splendor ſucceeded to that magnificent Simplicity, the Remains of which are ſtill ſo charming in thoſe Monuments that diſplay the juſter Senſe of Propriety in the foregoing Age.

AN

ANOTHER Spirit alſo aroſe, but it was the iniquitous Spirit of Malevolence, Envy, and Detraction. Not content with that Portion of Glory which would have accrued from an Imitation of thoſe excellent Models that illuſtrated the preceding Æra, by the Peruſal and Study of whom all ſubſequent Ages muſt receive the moſt eſſential Service, a Party of gloomy, ſullen Mortals entered the Liſts, profeſſedly to defame and diſcredit them; and unable to recommend themſelves by their own Merit, attempted to depreciate the Worth, and ſully the Luſtre, of no few of thoſe for whom the Public entertained the moſt reaſonable Preposſeſſion.

THEIR Endeavours proved, however, ineffectual. Notwithſtanding the voluminous Attacks of many a Zoilus, the Objects at which their ſpiteful Criticiſms were levelled, have ſtood their Ground againſt all the Malice of thoſe ill-natured Lucubrations; the Authors whereof are now almoſt totally forgotten, and conſigned over to that Obſcurity from which it was a Pity they

ever did, as it is highly probable they never will any more, emerge.

AFTER the Extinction of this envious, defamatory Spirit, a more equitable and auſpicious one appeared, which more properly than any other characterizes the preſent Age, and will tranſmit it to future Times as of equal Utility with the former. This was the Spirit of Judgment and Criticiſm, a Praiſe it fully and indiſputably deſerves from the many judicious Performances it has abounded with; which, if they do not exhibit thoſe Heights of Eloquence and Expreſſion that ſo frequently mark the Compoſitions of the laſt, may yet, with the ſtricteſt Veracity, be affirmed to excel in a happy Fertility of ſublime Truths, conveyed in clear and elegant Language.

SUCH, it is apprehended, is the Reality of Things reſpecting the preſent State of Genius and Literature in France; a Country that can boaſt a living Catalogue of Names which alone would render it reſpectable to the lateſt Poſterity.

OBSER-

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

FRENCH, &c.

CHAP I.

HAVING given, in the Introduction, ſuch a brief hiſtorical Narrative of the French Nation, as ſeemed abſolutely neceſſary for the better underſtanding the enſuing Account of their Character and their Manners, we ſhall now proceed to obſerve that one of the firſt Obſervations that occurs to an Engliſh Traveller in France, is, that Paris, its Capital, though immenſe, does not equal the Dimenſions of London: a City that bids fair to attain, in a ſhort Time, to the real Magnitude of ancient Rome; which, according to the moſt accu-

rate Accounts and Inveſtigations, ſeems not, even when arrived at its fartheſt Growth, to have covered much more Ground than the Metropolis of England does at preſent. The real Magnitude, becauſe ſome modern Writers, in the Enthuſiaſm of their Admiration for all that related to the ancient Romans, have indulged themſelves in the moſt extravagant and fabulous Calculations on this Subject.

This, in all Likelihood, will never be the Caſe of Paris, to the Extent of which Limits have long ſince been appointed; not improbably according to an Advice ſaid to have been given by Cardinal Richlieu to his Maſter, Lewis the thirteenth. That crafty and arbitrary Miniſter, well knew that all large Cities were dangerous Impediments in the Way of Tyranny, by the Freedom of Speech and the Communication of Sentiments, unavoidable in Crowds; to ſay nothing of the Uſe made of the Preſs on ſuch Occaſions, and the Multiplicity of other Means of facilitating, with the utmoſt Secrecy and Diſpatch, both private and public Correſpondence and Information. From

theſe Conſiderations aroſe, in all Probability the Determination to remove every Obſtacle to the Eſtabliſhment of Deſpotiſm that might accrue from the Size and Populouſneſs of the Capital. Though it cannot be denied ſuch a Meaſure might be accounted for and juſtified upon the obvious Maxim that militates in all Countries againſt an exceſſive Increaſe of the Metropolis, which ought always to bear a due Proportion to the Extent and the Power of the State.

THE Largeneſs of London was already conſpicuous in the Days of Queen Elizabeth. There are ſeveral Charts extant, publiſhed at that Time, wherein the Number of People it contained was computed at more than Three Hundred Thouſand.

INFLUENCED, no Doubt, by the ſame Motives which actuated Richlieu, that Princeſs (in whoſe Reign the Power veſted in the Crown was far ſuperior to what her Succeſſors have been allowed) fearing, with Reaſon, the Increaſe of a Place whoſe Riches,

and the Multitude of whoſe Inhabitants, might, in Proceſs of Time, embolden them to aſſume a greater Spirit and Independence on the Court, than was conſiſtent with the Authority ſhe thought herſelf entitled to maintain, judged it highly proper to ſet Bounds to its farther Augmentation.

But the Act that was framed to this Intent met with little Regard, and was very ill obſerved; the Inlargement of London continuing, without any Interruption, during all the following Reign.

Charles the firſt, who attempted to revive and enforce this Regulation, begun by iſſuing an Order, prohibiting the Reſort of the Nobility, Gentry, and others to London (except in Parliament Time) without his ſpecial Permiſſion. But as People ſaw clearly through his Deſigns, far from obeying this Injunction, they rather came to Town in greater Crowds than ever.

The general Aſpect of Things in Paris, is gay and flouriſhing enough, if we deſcend no lower than the Middling of the induſ-

induſtrious Claſſes; but ſuch as are beneath that Level will not bear much Scrutiny; and the Condition of what goes by the Name of Populace is miſerable indeed. And yet, though there is much more Miſery, in fact, among theſe, than among thoſe of their own Degree at London, there is leſs in Appearance, to ſuch as are unattentive to any other Indication of it than that of Apparel. But whoever examines the Countenance of the loweſt Sort in our Engliſh Metropolis, and compares their Plight of Body (diveſted of that Shabbineſs and Raggedneſs for which they manifeſt ſo ſhameful and ſcandalous an Unconcern) with the Countenance of the Vulgar at Paris, will ſoon perceive the Condition of the former is far preferable to that of the latter, in Point of Food and Plentifulneſs of Nouriſhment; not only the moſt eſſential Article in Life, but that whereof the comfortable Enjoyment enables Mankind to diſpenſe with almoſt every other.

The Wretchedneſs of the Country People throughout France, forms a lamentable Contraſt, to the Semblance of Gaiety that

is ſo much affected in the Capital; where Individuals are dextrous enough in deviſing Expedients to conceal their Poverty. But the poor ſimple Ruſticks are totally unacquainted with theſe Shifts; and their Situation is, both in Fact and Appearance, very piteous and uncomfortable.

THEY who make ſo light of the Bleſſings of a free Government (as too many are apt to do among us, from what Motives is hard to determine) would do well to pay a ſerious Viſit, not to Paris, where the exterior Glare of Things will dazzle them, but to the Provinces of France, where the Inhabitants, even of ſuch as are leaſt haraſſed and oppreſſed, are beneath all Compariſon, inferior in every Conſideration of Circumſtances, to the Peaſantry of England; a Race of Mortals, far happier than any of their Degree, in any other Part of the World; and whoſe peculiar Felicity, is the firſt Object that awakens the Attention of all Travellers.

THE French themſelves (always ready to diminiſh whatever can contribute to render

our

our Country preferable to theirs) cannot help acknowledging this Truth, which, indeed is too viſible for a Denial: And one meets not unfrequently with ſome who have Candour enough to attribute it, among other Cauſes, to the ſuperior Excellence of our political Conſtitution.

But this latter is a Thing few Frenchmen dare admire in public; though many of them envy us the Poſſeſſion of it in ſecret. A Fact notoriouſly evident by the inceſſant Complaints one is witneſs of in ſuch Companies as think themſelves at Liberty to vent their Diſcontents. When the French are ſilent on Affairs of State, and the Intrigues of the Court, it proceeds from the Apprehenſion of a Diſcovery, through thoſe Multitudes of Spies, commiſſioned by the Lieutenant of Police at Paris, that ſwarm in Coffee-houſes, and all other Places of public Reſort; much in the ſame Manner as the Emiſſaries of the grand Vizir at Conſtantinople.

CHAP. II.

WHAT firſt prepoſſeſſes a Stranger in Favour of the French, is the Affability and Friendlineſs he experiences from thoſe to whom he is properly recommended. Add to this, what (if he is a Perſon of ingenuous, liberal Sentiments, and from his Situation in Life, intitled to the Frequentation of genteel Society) muſt afford him ſtill greater Satisfaction, the unaffected Complaiſance and Familiarity of Behaviour ſubſiſting between Individuals whoſe Circumſtances are widely diſproportionate, but whom an intimate Senſe and Conviction of the Reſpect and Encouragement that are due to intellectual Merit, places on the moſt agreeable Level.

CERTAIN it is, that among the French, more, perhaps, than any other Nation, an Equality in Point of Education, ſecures an equal Reciprocation of Urbanity and good Manners between Perſons very different in Degree: and that the Great, far from ſlighting or ſhunning

ſhunning their Inferiors, if Men of known Abilities, are on the contrary, remarkably fond of their Company and Converſation.

In this Particular France is the firſt Country in the World; and may be cited as a Pattern, which it were to be wiſhed the reſt of Europe would copy with as much Eagerneſs, as it does thoſe many other of its Cuſtoms no leſs deſerving of Contempt than the former is worthy of Applauſe.

It has often been complained, that notwithſtanding the flouriſhing State of Literature in England, Men of Learning enjoy not the Happineſs of a free and eaſy Intercourſe with the Great, unleſs there is a proſpect of turning their Abilities to a political Uſe.

This was notoriouſly exemplified in the Conduct of the Lords Bolinbroke and Oxford; each of whom, though fond of being conſidered in the Light of a Mecænas, had evidently, in their Patronage of Scholars, a principal Eye to the Service they promiſed themſelves from their Pen, in the political Altercations of thoſe troubleſome Times.

And yet nothing is clearer than that Miniſters who are deſirous of Popularity, ſhould honour and countenance Men of Letters. All who have neglected this very material Point have had ample Cauſe for Repentance, as Hiſtory teſtifies beyond Diſpute. The celebrated Cardinal Mazarin, was, for inſtance, a Man who, as he neither had, nor, indeed, pretended to have much Literature, and depended intirely on the Power of the Court for Protection and Support, took little Notice of Men of Wit and Genius. But this Conduct (from whatever Motive it might proceed) created him more Enemies than he was aware of. Without ſtraining Matters, he owed, in a great Meaſure, to their Hatred and Contempt, much of the Oppoſition he met with from all Quarters; and notwithſtanding he found Means to reinſtate himſelf in the Poſts from whence they had contributed to expel him, and to arrive at ſuch a Plenitude of Might, in a Land where he was a Stranger, as ſpoke him a complete Politician (ſo far as related to his perſonal Aggrandizement) yet he continued almoſt univerſally deteſted in France, during his whole Life; and ſince his Death, a Period

riod at which Enmity uſually ceaſes, and Juſtice is done to a Man's Memory, no Defender of his Reputation has yet aroſe.

In our own Times and Country, the no leſs famous Sir Robert Walpole, by neglecting Men of Letters, drew the whole Load of their Odium upon him. Hence it is that no Mercy hath been ſhewn to his Character; and that he is, according to the Repreſentations of the Majority of Writers, accounted the chief Author and Modeller of that regular Syſtem of Corruption which has nearly ſubverted the Conſtitution.

The uncommon Regard paid in France to Perſons eminent in Literature, is no leſs extraordinary than commendable, when it is conſidered that neither moral nor intellectual Worth are ſo quickly diſcovered, or meet with ſo much Conſpicuity of Notice and Eſteem in extenſive as in ſmaller States, where Individuals are within Reach of each other, and more at Hand to enquire into the Character of all who are above the meer Vulgar. In ſuch a State, indeed, it is of peculiar Conſequence

to

to ſtand in a perſonally meritorious Light, as Merit is not only more viſible, but by the Credit and Deference it procures among all Ranks, becomes, in a Manner, its own Recompence.

THE Caſe is far otherwiſe in large Empires; where Men are placed at too remote a Diſtance for theſe reciprocal Scrutinies; and where, from the prodigious Inequality of Conditions, effected by the Diſparity of pecuniary Circumſtances, they who are ſtationed on the inferior Liſt, however deſerving in other Reſpects, are hardly deemed worthy of any Obſervation. In ſuch a Syſtem, therefore, Riches are neceſſarily, thro' the Elevation they confer, almoſt the ſole Object of Attention; being, in Fact, the only Means to dazzle and lead the ignorant, unprincipled Multitude, inſenſible to any Inducements but ſuch as operate on the groſſeſt Perception.

A GREAT Nation conſiſts of too many Members to be won ſeperately by Dint of Reaſon. Their Applauſe and Admiration are no otherwiſe obtained than by ſuperficial Splendor,

dor, which needs no Argument to recommend it to the Generality. Hence the Aim of all who aſpire at Power and Grandeur is the Acquiſition of Opulence, which alone is fully ſufficient to ſecure them Reſpect and Intereſt; and while they need no additional Qualifications, there is no Cauſe to wonder they ſhould undervalue in others, what they find no Reaſon to lament the Want of in themſelves.

CHAP-

CHAP III.

THE greateſt Novelty to an Engliſhman whoſe firſt Excurſion abroad is to France, is the great Number of Clergymen and Monaſtics, he daily meets with, both in his Walks, and in the Companies he frequents. Notwithſtanding the Inutility, or rather, indeed, the pernicious Conſequences of maintaining ſuch a Multitude of inactive Members of Society is obvious, Impartiality requires it to be acknowledged that, abſtracting from the Abſurdity of ſuch Inſtitutions, and viewing them in a ſeperate and individual Light, they are uſually Perſons of a very polite Deportment; and as their Breeding is diveſted of that Finicalneſs ſo common among other Claſſes, it is perhaps more acceptable and faultleſs than that of almoſt any other People whatever.

THEIR Lives are in general exemplary; their Converſation edifying, and conſiſtent with the Gravity of their Profeſſion.

And

And tho' there be many who pique themſelves in Diſcourſe on a diffuſive Acquaintance with worldly Matters (eſpecially the Politics of their own and other Nations, and the various Occurrences that occupy the Curioſity of the Times) yet the major part are free from this Oſtentation; and ſeem addicted to Purſuits of a very different Kind, and to verify by their Practice, the Sincerity of their Attachment to the Maxims they profeſs.

So far may, with Truth be aſſerted, of moſt of the religious Orders in France; which, in one Reſpect, may be likened to the principal trading Towns, in England, Holland, or Germany. As each of thoſe endeavour to render themſelves famous by excelling in ſome Buſineſs which becomes, in a manner, appropriated to them, ſo each Order is remarkable for cultivating ſome particular Branch of Knowledge. The Benedictines are celebrated for profound Science of Antiquities. The Dominicans for ſcholaſtic Philoſophy and Divinity. The Jeſuits for polite Literature. And the Oratorians for mathematical Studies.

THIS Diverſity in the Employments peculiar to each of theſe Orders, may eaſily be traced from the Humour and Complexion of the ſeveral Times at which they were inſtituted.

THE Benedictines, whoſe Origin is more ancient than that of any other religious Order in the weſtern Parts of Chriſtendom, (being ſo remote as the fifth Century) were, during a long Courſe of Ages, the only Claſs of Men among whom the Means of obtaining Knowlege were preſerved; as the only Places where Libraries could be ſaid to exiſt were Monaſteries. Hence they were, of conſequence, led to the Peruſal of thoſe numerous Manuſcripts they were continually buſied in tranſcribing; and, ſince the revival of Letters, have enriched the learned World with ſome of the moſt valuable Publications relating to Antiquity both on eccleſiaſtical and prophane Subjects. A Montfaucon, a Mabillon, are Names ſufficiently known.

THE Dominicans aroſe when the Ariſtotelian Philoſophy, as it was impertinently called,

called, had ſpread from Spain, where it was in high Repute among the Moors, (then Maſters of that Country) to the other Parts of Europe. As their Profeſſion was that of public Inſtructors, agreeably to the Appellation they aſſumed of *Frères Precheurs*, Brethren Preachers, it was natural they ſhould endeavour to qualify themſelves for ſuch a Taſk, by an Application to what was then eſteemed the moſt ſublime and neceſſary of all Learning.

The Jeſuits, whoſe Date is not more ancient than the Æra of the Reformation, made their Appearance when claſſical Studies, long neglected and buried in the Ignorance and Barbarity of the middle Ages, were emerging every where, and attracted the chief Notice of all who aimed at Conſpicuity in the Republic of Letters. Hence, as their Inſtitution was deſigned for the Education of Youth, it became incumbent on them to diſtinguiſh themſelves by their Skill in Literature.

The Oratorians came not long before the Middle of the laſt Century; a Period when

Geometry, and all the other Portions of Mathematics began to be cultivated with uncommon Fervour. To theſe, therefore, they applied themſelves, in Conformity to the Taſte then prevalent; as alſo to Logical and Metaphyſical Studies, which were no leſs in Vogue, and wherein they have produced ſome eminent Proficients. The renowned Malbranche was of this Order.

The Difference in Dreſs between theſe various Bodies of Men is no little Curioſity, and affords real Matter of Entertainment to Proteſtant Strangers, unaccuſtomed to ſo prepoſterous a Deviation from the uſual Modes of Apparel.

One ſhould not, however, forget, that in thoſe divers Forms of Dreſſing, the Habit commonly worn by the Vulgar, at the Time of the primitive Inſtitution of ſeveral of theſe Orders, was the Model they followed. The Scapulary for Inſtance, (which is the diſtinguiſhing Badge of almoſt all Monaſtics) was, at firſt, the rough Covering they threw over them when employed in manual Labour, to which, though now entirely diſuſed,

uſed, they formerly dedicated a very conſiderable Portion of their Time. In the ſame manner, the rude, uncouth Garb of the Capucins was that of the poorer and meaner Sort of People in Italy, at the ſuperſtitious Period which produced this mortified Set of Men.

As to the ſecular Clergy, it ought to be held in a very different Light from the religious Orders. They not only enjoy every Priviledge and every Pleaſure of civil Life in common with the Laity, but Numbers of them are in many, perhaps moſt reſpects, as much, if not more deſerving the Stile of Men of the World, than any other Denomination in Society.

THE Members of the Gallican Church (the Title given to the eccleſiaſtical Hierarchy in France, as eſtabliſhed by Law) have much more Moderation in their Temper than their Brethren in Italy and Spain; and ſeem, at preſent, pretty well cured of that perſecuting Spirit which ſo fatally animated their Predeceſſors. The chief religious Inveteracy now ſubſiſting in that Kingdom is

between the Moliniſts and the Janſeniſts, the firſt of whom may, in one Senſe, not improperly be compared to the warm Sticklers for the Church of England, and the ſecond, to the rigid Preſbyterians.

The long Continuance of Proteſtantiſm in France, has greatly contributed to abate the Force of Papal Superſtition. Many abſurd Notions and Practices have been exploded and aboliſhed; and the Reſpect and blind Obedience formerly profeſt for the Deciſions and Decrees of the See of Rome, daily diminiſhes; if one may not, on the Strength of ſome very late Occurrences, infer that it is abſolutely reduced to nothing.

As, during the Reign of Lewis the fourteenth, religious Diſputes were endleſs, and from the Objects that gave riſe to them, became at laſt ridiculous, they conſiderably weakened the Belief in many of thoſe Tenets which had hitherto been looked upon as ſacred. Diſguſted at thoſe perpetual Broils about Matters of no Signification, and inſpirited by ſome equally judicious and reſolute Individuals, the Court was very near ſhaking

ing off the Romiſh Yoke. The Aſſembly of the Clergy of France (a Meeting pretty much reſembling our Convocation in England) had already paved the Way for ſuch a Step, by ſome very bold Declarations, highly unfavourable to the papal Supremacy. But the Bigotry of Lewis the fourteenth, a Prince, tho' voluptuous in his Perſon, ever a Slave to his Confeſſors, who were ſecretly in the Intereſt of the Court of Rome, prevented the Execution of this ſalutary Scheme, to the great Diſappointment and Grief of the ſenſible Part of his Subjects.

The French Clergy, like their Engliſh Brethren, are very unequally provided for. The ſame ſcandalous Methods of Pluralities and Sinecures prevail in both Kingdoms, and are as much complained of with as little Effect. Many Remedies have been propoſed, and allowed to be excellently deviſed, and deſerving of the higheſt Notice and Encouragement. But the Influence of thoſe who were at the Head of Affairs, and had their needy Favourites to promote, has hitherto clafhed with theſe equitable Deſigns, which at the ſame Time would not fail to prove de-

trimental to the Views of thoſe great Families, who look on the Revenues of the Church as Patrimonies reſerved for their younger Sons.

THERE is, however, one very material Circumſtance which renders this unequal Proviſion leſs hurtful and oppreſſive in France than in England: and that is the Celibacy of the French Clergy; which enables them to ſtruggle through Life with much more Facility than our Churchmen, who being moſtly married, are obliged to look to the Maintenance and Eſtabliſhment of generally a numerous Progeny, while in France Clergymen are totally exempted from this Burden, to ſay nothing of their more frequent Admiſſion to the Tables and Houſes of their Friends and Patrons, who invite them the more willingly, as they have nothing to apprehend from their Endeavours at matrimonial Connexions with their female Relations; which, among others, is, perhaps, one of the principal Reaſons why the young unmarried Clergy, in England, have ſo ſmall an Intercouſe with opulent Families.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

NOTWITHSTANDING the French reproach us for too much Indulgence in the Quantity of our Food, it is plain, that ſuch among them as can afford it, fall not ſhort of us in this Reſpect. The only Difference is, that making more frequent and ſet Meals, they eat leſs at a Time than we do. It muſt, however, be allowed, that tho' the Quantity be much the ſame, yet as their Nouriſhment is of a lighter Quality, the Conſequence is, naturally, an eaſier and leſs unequal Flow of the animal Spirits.

MUCH has been ſaid on this Subject of the Diſparity of feeding between the Engliſh and the French. Some have aſſerted, that the greater Subſtantiality of our Food, tho' it may render us leſs lively and jocund, is, in all Likelihood, the real Cauſe of our more ſolid Way of thinking; from an Opinion, that the Strength derived to the Body from invigorating Nutriment, may be communicated to the Mind; the Influence over whoſe Operations

Operations, through ſuch Kind of Means, is too common and perceptible to ſuffer any Doubt.

One may ſo far ſubſcribe to this Notion as to allow, that Vigour and Fortitude of Heart are much more generally found in Perſons that live on Fleſh, than in ſuch as live on lighter Meat. The Chineſe, who are the leaſt Fleſh-eaters, are notoriouſly the moſt unwarlike of all Nations. The People of Indoſtan, who from ſuperſtitious Principles abſtain from animal Food, are no leſs noted for their Want of Intrepidity. The Negroes in Africa, whoſe Diet is pretty ſimilar, reſemble them likewiſe in this Reſpect; as do the Natives of the larger Part of South America, who feed chiefly on Vegetables.

On the other Hand, thoſe Nations that uſe much animal Food, are inconteſtably the moſt robuſt and the moſt courageous. The Tartars, who live in a Manner on raw Feſh, are the very hardieſt of Men. The Europeans Turks are the braveſt of the Name; and infinitely ſuperior to the Aſiatic, who

who draw their chief Suſtenance from the Productions of the Earth. The Aborigines of North America are incomparably the moſt intrepid of all the Nations of that vaſt Continent. The Armies of the various Powers in Europe form indiſputably not only the beſt diſciplined, but alſo the moſt intrepid and reſolute of Soldiers : and it is preſumed one may, without Partiality, affirm there is not in the World ſo fearleſs and daring a Body of Men as our Engliſh Sailors.

But that the intellectual Faculties receive the ſame Proportion of Advantages from the greater Subſtantiality of our Food, is, it muſt be confeſt, contrary to the Sentiments of thoſe that have treated moſt judiciouſly of the human Syſtem ; who unanimouſly agree, that the lighteſt, as well as the moſt moderate Quantity of Food, is, for the plaineſt phyſical Reaſons, the moſt conducive to Freedom of Spirits, a clear Head, and Depth of Reflexion.

Among other remarkable Inſtances adduced by way of Proof, that the lighteſt of Food is beſt calculated to leave the Mind intire

tire Poſſeſſion of itſelf, and inveſt it, as it were, with its fulleſt Powers, it is recorded of Sir Iſaac Newton, that when he applied himſelf to what is eſteemed the greateſt Stretch of human Penetration (the Study, Inveſtigation, and Analyſis of the Theory of Light and Colours) to quicken his Faculties and fix his Attention, he confined himſelf, during that Time, to a ſmall Quantity of Bread, with a little Sack and Water, of which, without any Regulation, he took as he found a Craving, or a Failure of Spirits.

In like Manner it is affirmed, that Mr. Law, the famous Projector of the Miſſiſſipi Scheme, to keep his Head clear, and Faculties acute, in order to obtain a Superiority of Skill in Gaming, lived many Years on half a Chicken a Day, with about a Pound of Bread, and drank nothing but Water or aqueous Liquors; by which Means he won conſiderable Sums.

However, then, the greater Subſtantiality of our Food may, as it certainly does, generate Courage and Reſolution in the Inhabitants of this Iſland, ſome other Cauſe muſt

muſt be aſſigned for our more ſolid Way of Thinking: and this, doubtleſs, is purely the Effect of our political Conſtitution; a Fact incontrovertible, when it is conſidered, that ſome Centuries ago, when this Nation was under an arbitrary Government, there ſeem no ſufficient Grounds to conclude, that we were a more enlightened People than our Neighbours.

But if intellectual Abilities receive not that Support and Aſſiſtance from the ſuperior Copiouſneſs and Excellence of our Food, which ſome have imagined, certain it is, on the other Hand, that external Comelineſs and an Air of bodily Vigour and Proſperity are chiefly from this, among other Cauſes, much more diffuſively met with in England than in France. Bleſſings which, tho' ſuch as poſſeſs them not may ſometimes affect to undervalue, are the more deſirable, as they afford the higheſt Enjoyment to Sight, and confer a Luſtre on the Party that enhances the Worth of the nobleſt Qualifications.

That theſe happy Effects chiefly proceed from the Cauſe aſſigned, is pretty clear from the

the Caſe of thoſe Natives of England that have been brought up in France, who, in the Courſe of a very few Years, not only contract the Ways and Habits of the French, but alſo aſſume their Appearance and Complexion, in a Degree that almoſt, if not entirely, effaces the Looks of an Engliſhman.

We may conclude this Topic with obſerving, that the great and fundamental Reaſon of theſe exterior Advantages, is the more equal Repartition of Property among the Subjects of this free Government, which enables the very loweſt Claſſes among us to procure ſufficient and regular Supplies of wholeſome Food.

This is far from being the Caſe at all Times, eſpecially with the Peaſantry in ſome, perhaps moſt, other Parts of Europe. Numbers of whom may too reaſonably be ſuſpected to periſh through abſolute Want and Miſery: which is an Accident ſeldom known in England.

This main Cauſe, together with the pernicious Methods of dreſſing their Victuals, and,

and, what is another very material Conſideration, the almoſt incredible Slovenneſs, not to ſay Filthineſs of the Generality of the poorer Sort in France, Spain, Italy, and elſewhere, renders them leſs healthful, comely and perſonable, than thoſe of the ſame Degree in England.

CHAP. V.

PEOPLE of Rank in France are prodigiouſly fond of exterior Marks of Grandeur. From this Motive they ſeldom ſtir abroad without their Equipage, and would, till within theſe few Years, have been aſhamed to be ſeen walking the Streets.

But it is obſervable, that ſince the Peace, the glorious Figure we made during the late War, having induced a greater Number of Perſons of Diſtinction, of all Countries, and particularly of the French Nation, to viſit England, they have, in Conſequence, begun to

to adopt Cuſtoms which were peculiar to ourſelves, and People of Faſhion are now met walking in Undreſs on a Morning in the Streets of Paris, who formerly would have thought it beneath their Dignity.

It may well be imagined, however, that the Imitation of the Engliſh in this Reſpect, has not yet obtained very much in France.

In the mean Time, they among the French whoſe Circumſtances will not afford a Carriage, are in general remarkably careful to keep up as much State in their Exterior as is compatible with Prudence, and oftentimes much more.

Thus Swords and full Dreſſes, the wearing of which, unleſs on particular Occaſions, is ſo uncuſtomary in England, were, 'till very lately, almoſt always worn in France; and nothing is ſtill more common than to ſee Numbers of People ſauntering in the Streets of Paris, as completely and magnificently apparelled as if they were going to Court.

Persons of the very firſt Figure ſcruple not, in England, to go on Foot everywhere,

where, and, unleſs in wet Weather, ſeem in general to prefer the tranſacting of Buſineſs of all Denominations in this unceremonious manner. A method of acting at which Foreigners, when informed of the Quality and Importance of the Individuals they frequently meet with in their Walks, often teſtify the utmoſt Surprize.

THE Truth is that the Occupations of People of Condition in France are much more reſtricted than thoſe of their Equals in England, and center chiefly among thoſe of their own Sphere: who, though compoſing a large Body, do not give themſelves much Concern about any thing that is not conducive to Pleaſure and Amuſement; the only Object which, in the leiſure of Peace, they ſeem to think deſerving of Attention, and to purſue with any Ardour.

HENCE, their chief Paſtime is that Intercourſe with the Fair Sex which goes under the Name of Gallantry; an Intercourſe whereof Vanity is the real Baſis:

as an unfeigned attachment cannot be ſuppoſed to influence Connections formed with that Facility and Precipitation ſo uſual, in France, in theſe matters.

THIS Employment, however, conſtitutes the *Summum Bonum* of a French Man of Faſhion; who is never more delighted than when he imagines the whole gay World is informed, and takes Notice of his Proceedings in this reſpect; and would, indeed, be very much diſpleaſed if all his Acquaintance did not participate in the knowledge of his ſucceſs in ſuch Enterprizes.

PURSUITS of this Nature are (to the Honour of the Engliſh Nation) much more in Vogue abroad, than among our Nobility and Gentry: whoſe political turn of Mind is ever ingageing them in perpetual Scenes of ſerious Buſineſs; and will not, in general ſuffer them to idle ſo much of their Time in needleſs Diverſions as their more voluptuous Neighbours.

THIS propenſity to Diſſipation in the French, proceeds in a great meaſure, from the

the Frame of their Government. Not daring to meddle with public Affairs in that bold, open manner they ought to be treated, they leave them to ſuch as through dint of Patience and Submiſſion to the Caprice of thoſe who are in favour, have intrigued themſelves into the Miniſterial Departments of the State; and convinced by daily Experience, that Talents and Capacity are not the Road to Perferment in this Province, they neglect the Means of qualifying themſelves for it: looking upon Aſſiduity and Application to the Studies neceſſary for that purpoſe as Labour loſt, from their inefficacy in proving a recommendation, and furthering the Ends of a laudable Ambition. Diſcouraged by theſe unpromiſing proſpects, and determined by the Example of ſuch in whom the freedom of Thought and Speech reſulting from Genius improved by Knowledge, has been ſeverely repreſt, they loſe all Reliſh for what, inſtead of being ſerviceable, may rather become dangerous. Leaving therefore, thoſe bookiſh Lucubrations (as many affect to call them) to thoſe who have diſcretion enough to read and meditate in

Silence, they devote their Lives to leſs ardurous Taſks; and content with Safety and Eaſe, are very little ſollicitous in what manner their Time is ſpent; often murdering the beſt part of it in the moſt effeminate and moſt trifling avocations.

THERE is nothing, perhaps, wherein the Diſparity between the Engliſh and French Men of Faſhion, is more viſible and ſtriking than in their different Conduct towards Womankind. The French dedicate to them almoſt their whole Time, whereas the Engliſh allow them but a moderate ſhare of their Company and Attention: ſome have thought too moderate, conſidering the many Improvements our Sex receives by aſſociating with the other. But if the French excell us in the Advantage derivable from ſo pleaſing an Intercourſe, the misfortune is not ſo great when it is reflected that by indulging it in the ſame exceſs as they do, what we might gain in Delicacy and Refinement, we might loſe in Manlineſs of Behaviour and Liberty of Diſcourſe; the two Pillars on which the Edifice of our national Character is mainly ſupported.

In a free State like ours, there will neceſſarily be found in the Modes of Intercourſe a Tincture of that Unpliantneſs inſeparable from the Minds of Men who feel themſelves unawed by any Reſtraints but ſuch as affect equally the whole Community, from the higheſt to the loweſt: a Truth which Monteſquieu had evidently in his Eye, when he took Notice that Libertiniſm was more prevalent in England than Gallantry, from the leſs Degree of Deference and Condeſcenſion required in the former.

This Truth may ſtill be further illuſtrated, by recollecting what has been premiſed in the Introduction to this Work, of the Æras that preceded the Reign of Lewis the Thirteenth. Before that Period, the French were by no Means the complaiſant, ſoft mannered People they are at preſent. The Reaſon was, that they poſſeſſed much more political Freedom.

In his Time were firſt encouraged and patronized thoſe finiſhed Airs of Breeding, and ſtudied Manners, that have been gaining Ground ever ſince. Convinced that

the Exiſtence and the Preſervation of civil Liberty depend not a little on the cheriſhing a blunt, unceremonious Diſpoſition, they who were at the Head of Things ſaw the Neceſſity of modelling the Court and its Adherents into thoſe elaborate Forms of Politeneſs that would quickly be imitated in a Country where the Natives pique themſelves on adopting whatever is exteriorly gay and ſplendid. They well foreſaw the Tranſition from external Modes of Complaiſance and Condeſcenſion in Affairs of little Moment, to Obedience and Submiſſion in eſſential Points, would in Proceſs of Time, without much Difficulty, be completely effected; from that natural Proneneſs to Analogy and Correſpondence ſo powerfully ſubſiſting between all our Actions.

HENRY the Fourth was too honeſt a Man, and too wiſe a King, either to aim at or to wiſh for arbitrary Power. His Temper, alſo was too frank and generous to give any Countenance to cringing and Adulation either in Words or Deportment. But they who governed after him inherited nothing of theſe Qualities. Subtlety and Artifice were

were at the Bottom of all their Conduct: and as their Deſigns regarding the public were too odious to meet with the leaſt Approbation, they ſtrove, on the other Hand, to render themſelves acceptable by an Exceſs of Smoothneſs and Civility in their private Tranſactions with Individuals.

RICHELIEU continued and perfected the Syſtem of Tyranny thus begun; and it received its final Confirmation under Mazarin, who contributed to fix, by his crafty Management, what the other had partly founded on Force and Violence. The firſt ruined the French Conſtitution, under Pretence of aſſerting the Dignity of the Crown, and curbing the Inſolence of the too powerful Nobility. The ſecond ſtrengthened the Eſtabliſhment of Slavery, by way of reſtoring Order and Tranquillity, and baniſhing Confuſion and Diſcord from the Kingdom. The former pretended a Reformation of Abuſes; the latter acted under the ſpecious Title of a Pacificator.

SINCE that Epocha, when Peace and Deſpotiſm were thus jointly and permanently

ſettled throughout France; the French, it is true, have been a politer People than they were before: but certainly, that Politeneſs was a poor Exchange, when it is reflected they purchaſed it with the Loſs of their Freedom.

THAT diſgraceful Period put an End to the bold, untamable Spirit the French Nobility had ſo long been remarkable for exerting, in Oppoſition to the Tyranny of Courts and Miniſters: an Oppoſition which was now metamorphoſed into the baſeſt Compliance and Servility, and the moſt ignominious Oblivion of the Right inherent in Mankind, to diſſent from their Rulers when theſe are guilty of Error and Oppreſſion

To this Meanneſs of Diſpoſition it was owing that the Notions prevailing at Court became at laſt the Standard of Juſtneſs and Propriety, and that they are now looked upon as the Creed of every good and loyal Man; its Dictates being implicitly received with as much Reverence as if meer blind, ſtupid, uninformed Obedience was the chief Merit of Subjects in all political Affairs.

SUCH

Such are indiſputably, the Sentiments of the Generality in France; where a ſtrange Ignorance, or rather Infatuation, ſeems to preponderate in whatever relates to the true Principles of Government: a Thing not a little aſtoniſhing, when we conſider that the Means of better Information cannot be ſaid to fail in a Country, where Education is on a very flouriſhing and illuſtrious Footing: and where, notwithſtanding the Prohibition of ſuch Books as treat freely on thoſe Matters, and the Strictneſs and Severity with which the Importation of them from abroad is prevented and puniſhed, Means are ſtill contrived to introduce and circulate them in ſufficient Numbers to gratify all who have the Curioſity to peruſe them.

There are, however, Exceptions from this Spiritleſs Strain of Submiſſion to deſpotic Maxims. One is ſometimes agreeably ſurprized to find, the enlarged Ideas of ſome Individuals who have eſcaped this national Contagion; who think and ſpeak as if born and bred in quite another Latitude, and may not unaptly be compared to thoſe Fruits which

which though reſtricted by Nature to warmer Climates, the Powers of Art and Induſtry are ſtill able to produce in the frozen Regions of the North.

CHAP. VI.

FRANCE is a Country where not only a Staunch Republican will meet with many offenſive Scenes, but where a Lover and Profeſſor of that Liberty and Independancy of Thinking, which is the greateſt Glory, as it is the moſt valuable Enjoyment, of rational Beings, will be equally diſguſted at the intellectual Bondage (if one may ſo term it) which fetters the Apprehenſions of Men, and ſuffers them not to act according to any other Rule but that of the Multitude.

HENCE, few Individuals in France live for themſelves, and can be ſaid to follow the Bent of their own Inclinations in ſuch Things as muſt neceſſarily come under the Cognizance of public Obſervation.

THIS

THIS complying Humour extends from the moſt material, to the moſt common Occurrences and Tranſactions of private Life. In all theſe Faſhion is the Word of Command in its fulleſt Acceptation. Thus the various Modes of Living, Ways of Diverſion, Topics of Converſation, Compliments, Dreſſes, and whatever belongs to Appearances, are in a Manner, ſo ſtrictly and minutely regulated by what they have thought proper to call the *Bon Ton* (one may venture to render it in Engliſh by good Taſte) that to deviate from it, in any Particular, always ſubjects the Tranſgreſſor to the Cenſures and Criticiſms of the World.

THIS ſcrupulous Conformity to eſtabliſhed Manners and Cuſtoms conſtitutes indubitably, as eſſential a Diffence as any ſubſiſting in the Character of the French, when compared with that of the Engliſh: no People acting more from pure, native, unreſtrained Impulſe than we do, without inquiring about the Ways of others; and no Nation, on the other Hand, more tamely ſubmitting to the Guidance of the Mode, in every Reſpect, than the French.

ANOTHER

ANOTHER Line of Diſparity between theſe two Rivals, and a very conſiderable one too, is the exceſſive and abſurd Regard ſhewn by the latter to ſecondary Qualifications, (to give them the moſt honourable Title) ſuch as a Skill in Singing, Dancing, Muſical Inſtruments, and other Accompliſhments of leſs Merit.

THESE carry with them a far greater Weight of Recommendation than a Perſon unacquainted with the French will readily admit the Belief or even the Poſſibility of; and yet many Characters whoſe Worth and Excellence are mentioned with the higheſt Expreſſions of Applauſe, are chiefly made up of ſuch Ingredients.

NOTHING is more common than to hear in the foremoſt of a Man's Praiſes *quil ſe preſente parfaitement bien,* which is no more, in plain Engliſh, than that he has an eaſy Manner of preſenting himſelf in Company. It is not ſo much the Praiſe as the Manner in which it is ſpoken that convinces one how much Streſs the French lay on the Thing itſelf, and how highly it affects them.

We ought by no Means to undervalue and diſparage theſe inferior Qualifications, which are undoubtedly of Uſe as well as of Ornament, and contribute at leaſt to render our Perſons pleaſing. But at the ſame Time it muſt needs exaſperate an Individual of any Reflexion to hear every Moment ſuch Acclamations of Reſpect paid to a mere Outſide.

It is inconteſtably a general Fault of the French Nation to be charmed with ſuch Trifles; wherein he that is moſt expert never fails to paſs *pour un Homme qui ſait vivre*, one who underſtands Life; an Expreſſion, which, conſidering its real Meaning, is very improper on ſuch an Occaſion, and would never be ſeriouſly uſed for ſo poor a Signification, in our Language, which is not calculated to make much of a little Subject, and apply noble Words to trivial Thoughts.

Savoir vivre, That is to ſay the Knowledge of Life, is the pompous Denomination given to all that Experience and Dexterity ſome Folks poſſeſs in the uſual Intercourſe

Intercourſe and common Offices of Society, who often have ſcarce any other Merit to boaſt of, and whoſe barren Capacity has enabled them to arive no further than at theſe ſuperficial Attainments; wherein, to do Juſtice to ſuch Kind of Individuals, Nature, to make them ſome Sort of Amends, has generally qualified them to ſurpaſs their Superiors in every other Reſpect.

To make a Bow, enter a Room, or offer any Thing gracefully; to accoſt a Lady, or run over the Alphabet of Compliments, with an Air of Facility, and without the leaſt Appearance of Baſhfulneſs or Inexperience, is *ſavoir vivre*. To excell in knowing the various News of the Court (by which, however, is not to be underſtood any Thing of national Conſequence) but whether the King goes to this or that Palace; whether he rode out or walked in his Gardens; what Dreſſes were worn on ſuch a Day; who acquitted him, or herſelf, moſt conſpicuouſly at a Ball, theſe, which with us are no more than tranſient Subjects of Diſcourſe, will here engroſs a very material Portion of Time and Attention, and

live many a long Day in the Remembrance of People, as the frequent recalling of them to Notice in Converſation but too evidently proves.

We need not, however, be ſurprized that Things of ſo unintereſting a Nature, ſhould in France, come ſo frequently under Diſcuſſion, when we conſider how artfully Peoples Minds are warped from any Freedom of Exertion, and forced, as it were, to keep their diſtance from all thoſe Topics that by giving Birth to Speculations of a more ſolid Caſt; might bring thoſe Subjects on the Carpet, which the higher Powers in abſolute Governments will always moſt earneſtly Labour to ſecure from too nice and prying an Inſpection through a Conſciouſneſs of the Danger neceſſarily reſulting to the very Eſſence of their Authority from a public Reciprocation of Sentiments concerning their ordinary Methods of exerciſing it.

This Policy, common to all the deſpotic Courts of Europe, none is more ſtudious to inforce, by all the Means that Power has put into its Hands, than that of France: which

which is, in the ſtricteſt Reality, the true Cauſe of the amazing Frivolity of Speech that reigns in the Generality of French Companies.

After having thus freely expatiated on the Depravity of Taſte introduced and eſtabliſhed in Converſation, it is but Juſtice to acknowledge that, notwithſtanding the Futility of the Matters treated of, the Method of handling them makes one almoſt forget their Unworthineſs to employ our Thoughts Gracefulneſs and Facility of Expreſſion ſeem to caracteriſe the French when thus engaged: and a Foreigner, however, he may prefer the Sterling, inſtructive Diſcourſes that are ſo frequent in the ſocial Meetings of Engliſh Gentlemen of Education, will, if he is impartial pay the ſincereſt Hommage of Praiſe and Wonder to thoſe Capacities which are able to erect ſuch pleaſing Edifices from ſuch paltry Materials; which can amuſe at the ſame Time that we deſpiſe the Subject of our Amuſement; which, in ſhort, can inſlave our Attention in Spite of our Underſtanding; and may with the utmoſt Propriety be ſaid, in the Language of Swift to raiſe the gaudieſt Tulips from the pooreſt Soil.

CHAP. VII.

WOMEN, in every Country, have always much to do, and more to ſay; but in France they in a manner dictate all that is to be ſaid, and preſcribe all that is to be done in the genteel World. They who think greatly of the native Talents of Womankind will meet in France with ſtronger Proofs of the Rectitude of their Notions, than perhaps any where. In England the Glory of the Sex is Modeſty in their Behaviour, and Diſcretion in their Words: and tho' poſſeſt of an exquiſite Share of Wit and Senſe, yet they have too much Prudence to make a Parade of either: thinking it more eligible to reſerve them for Uſe on proper Opportunities, than to throw them away in Oſtentation. Hence, however ſeverely we reflect upon our Women, for being too curious and inquiſitive, it may be affirmed that, when compared to the French, the Engliſh Women ſeem rather to ſhun Occaſions of meddling with the Concerns of others, and are not fond of laying out their Abilities unleſs Neceſſity compel, or Intereſt au-

thorize their Exertion. Such, in general, is the Temper and Diſpoſition of the fair Sex of our Iſland.

FAR different is that of the French Women: no Country producing ſuch a reſtleſs, buſy Race; ever on the *qui vive*, ever ſeeking how to employ their active Spirits, and never ſatisfied, unleſs immerſed in the Proſecution of ſome Scheme; as much for the Sake of Employment, as with a View to ſucceed.

WERE one inclined to be jocoſe on this Subject, one might ſuppoſe that from Indignation at their being excluded, by the Conſtitution, from the Inheritance of the Crown, they were determined to make themſelves Amends, by laying Claim to the real Government of thoſe who have done them ſo much Injuſtice.

THIS, they have effected in the compleateſt Manner: no People being more the Dupes and Subjects of their Women than the French. There is nothing wherein they bear not a very conſiderable and material

terial Part. Their Influence is not confined to the gay and pleaſurable Provinces of Life: they boldly enter into the moſt grave and weighty Departments; and it is amazing what a Share they can too juſtly boaſt in the Management of Things of the higheſt Concern.

If Credit may be given to thoſe who from the Importance of their Station may well be preſumed to have Acceſs to the Knowledge of ſuch Facts, there is nothing in the profoundeſt Depth of Politics, but they will be found at the Bottom of; no Stir, no Commotion of any Kind, either at Court, in Town or Country, without their Interference. Their Activity, or, to ſpeak more properly, their intriguing Reſtleſſneſs, penetrates every where, and is not unfrequently attended with ſo powerful a Preponderance, that it ſometimes happens, the moſt ſolemn Councils are ſummoned, and the graveſt Conſultations held, when, at the ſame Time, the Deciſion has previouſly been prepared and fixed by their Artifices.

The very Clergy is not independent of them, however one might reaſonably ima-

gine ſuch a Body of Men ſecure from female Intruſion on the Buſineſs of their Profeſſion. But the Caſe is quite otherwiſe. One hardly hears of any Spiritual Preferments which the Ladies have not proved highly inſtrumental in procuring; and they are avowedly looked upon as the beſt and moſt effectual of any Patrons whatever, by the whole Body of Eccleſiaſtics.

NEITHER, indeed, is that Diſtance obſerved here between the Women and the Clergy, which the Vow of Celibacy in theſe latter ſeems naturally to imply. On the contrary, there is not a Claſs of Mortals that appear more fully convinced of the Neceſſity of aſſociating with the fair Sex. There is no Lady of any Diſtinction, or even of any tolerable Appearance in Life, whoſe Toilet is not honoured with ſome clerical Attendant, who either has, or pretends to have it in View, to obtain her Intereſt and Protection.

A LADY's Toilet here is, in Truth, the Shrine at which all Men of genteel Rank offer up their daily Services: no Woman is in the leaſt aſhamed of ſeeing herſelf in the Midſt of a male Croud of Morning Viſitants.

tants. As to the Toilets of Women of prime Faſhion, they are ſurrounded with Suitors of all Denominations, it being principally here they diſpatch their moſt material Buſineſs: and enough they moſt aſſuredly have; as, excepting the formal Tranſactions of Things by Penmanſhip (a Drudgery they leave to the Men) there is nothing they do not accompliſh the Settlement of, with a Readineſs and Facility Mankind are generally Strangers to. Such, indeed, is the Eaſe and Expedition they proceed with, that they may fairly be ſaid to do all Things *tout en badinant*, as the Phraſe repreſents them, by way of Play and Paſtime: ſo remarkable is the Feſtivity of their Deportment, even in the moſt arduous and difficult Affairs.

THESE Audiences are compoſed of all reputable Conditions and Profeſſions; and even their Spiritual Directors make their Appearance at ſuch Times, in virtue of that Capacity. Theſe are a Set of Men the moſt ridiculous, perhaps, in the whole Circle of Ideas. They are taken from the whole Corps indiſcriminately of ſecular and regular

Clergy, juſt as Fancy prompts their humble Penitents, a Title not more diminutive than their female Devotees amply deſerve, who are as implicitly ſubmiſſive in Spiritual Points, as their holy Guides can well deſire.

If theſe, however, through the Severity of their Notions, or the Diſagreeableneſs of their Manners, become unacceptable, there is a Remedy at Hand in the Liberty the Women enjoy of changing Directors as often as they think proper, their Choice being wholly free in that Reſpect. This, indeed, is a Priviledge many of them are pleaſed to make a very frequent Uſe of. It is no uncommon Thing for a Lady, in the Effuſion of her Heart, to mention no ſmall a Catalogue of them to her Familiars; and this without the leaſt Sign of Shame, or Uneaſineſs at ſuch a glaring Proof of the Unſteadineſs of her Diſpoſition. The Story in the *Diable boiteux*, of a Lady's Conduct relating to her Spiritual Director, is an exact Repreſentation of the French female World in that Particular.

A Circumstance ſhould not be omitted often diſpleaſing to a Huſband (if any Thing can

can diſturb the Serenity of a French Huſband, the moſt tranquil and eaſy of all Creatures in what regards his Wife) which is, that many of theſe ghoſtly Fathers are young and handſome, and ſometimes perhaps deſerving of a much leſs ſpiritual Appellation.

But Jealouſy is by no Means a Characteriſtic of the French. They live in the utmoſt Harmony with their merry Partners; and ſeem not, in Milton's Phraſe, to deem over reverently of the Nuptial Bed; and if Appearances may be relied on, Accounts are, in general, pretty near balanced on either Side.

Nevertheless it were wrong to infer from thence, that Connubial Happineſs is a Stranger in France. It is, on the contrary, much to be queſtioned, whether we can find any where more agreeable Inſtances of it. When a fond Pair meet in this Country, their natural Good-humour and Chearfulneſs, their Concurrence in whatever has a Tendency to promote Mirth, and, above all, their native Abhorrence of mutual Miſtruſt, renders their Life a Scene of perpetual Gladneſs; and thoſe Liberties, which in other Countries

Countries would often occaſion Suſpicions, if not a total Separation, are ſuffered here *ſans aucune Conſequence*, without any Attention being paid to them.

CHAP. VIII.

WHILE taking Notice of the domeſtic and familiar Intercourſe ſubſiſting between the Clergy and the fair Sex in France, it were unpardonable to omit a Being of which we ſimple Proteſtants entertain no Sort of Idea.

THIS Being is what they call here an *Abbé*, a Term not to be rendered in our Language, as their Exiſtence is poſterior to the Reformation, and no ſuch Character was known among the Romaniſts till about a a Century and a half ago, and ſcarce even then. Their Origin, like that of ſome Nations, is hardly diſcernible; tho' one may venture to aſſert that France has the beſt Right to claim the Merit of having produced them.

THEIR

THEIR firſt Appearance ſeems to have been about the Commencement of the laſt Century, as before that Æra it is preſumed the Title of Abbé is not to be met with, unleſs in the monaſtic Senſe, (in which it is very ancient) or to denote a Perſon poſſeſt of thoſe Revenues of an Abbey that fell to the Department of the Abbot; but as to the now common and almoſt burleſque Denomination of *Abbé*, it is of the recent Date above mentioned.

IT is, however, a very convenient Word to ſignify what could not otherwiſe be compriſed in one; as an *Abbé*, according to the ſtricteſt Definition, is a Perſon who has not yet obtained any preciſe or fixed Settlement in Church or State, but moſt heartily wiſhes for, and would accept of either, juſt as it may happen. There is no Deviation, it is to be hoped, from Truth in repreſenting them in this Light.

IN the mean while their Priviledges are many. They are admiſſible in all Companies, and no Degradation to the beſt, notwithſtanding they are ſometimes found in the

the worſt. Their Dreſs is rather that of an Academic, or of a profeſt Scholar, than of an Eccleſiaſtic; and never varying in Colour is no Incumbrance on the Pocket. Their Society is far from avoided; as Numbers of them are genteel, ſenſible, well-bred, and enlightened Men, fit for the Converſation of any whoſe Purſuit is either Entertainment or Inſtruction.

It ſhould alſo be remembered, that the Title of *Abbé* is not only applicable to thoſe we have been deſcribing, but likewiſe to Eccleſiaſtics of the higheſt Rank; Cardinals and Biſhops only being above it in the uſual Mention of Churchmen; all Degrees of whom it is otherwiſe promiſcuouſly annexed to, and neither hurts nor benefits any body's Character.

And really it is ſome Comfort to a poor Gentleman, as well as Scholar, that he can produce himſelf to the Community under the Shelter of ſome decent Appellation. That of Gentleman becomes ridiculous when the Means of ſupporting it are apparently want-

wanting ; and that of Scholar would be rather vain and affected.

THESE *Abbés* are very numerous, and no leſs uſeful. They are in Colleges, the Inſtructors of Youth ; in private Families, the Tutors of young Gentlemen : and many procure a decent Livelyhood by their literary and witty Compoſitions of all Kinds, from the profoundeſt Philoſophy to the moſt airy Romances. They are, in ſhort, a Body of Men that poſſeſſes a Fund of univerſal Talents and Learning ; and is inceſſantly employed in the Cultivation of every various Branch of Literature and Ingenuity. No Subject whatever eſcapes them; ſerious or gay, ſolid or ludicrous, ſacred or prophane, all pay Tribute to their Reſearches ; and as they are converſant in the loweſt, as well as the higheſt Topics, their Fame is equally great in the learned and in the ſcribbling World.

AN eſſential Article would be wanting in this Deſcription of the *Abbés* were we to paſs by their Devotion to the fair Sex; whoſe Favourites, in return, they have the Honour

Honour of being in the fulleſt and moſt enviable Degree. The Wit and Smartneſs for which they are uſually remarkable, are juſt the very Thing that ſuits the Ladies here; to pleaſe whom, all muſt labour in vain who are not abundantly provided with this grand *Deſideratum*, in France, where it is more in Requeſt and leſs willingly diſpenſed with, in all who aim at ingratiating themſelves with the Sex, than in any other Country whatever. *De l'Eſprit et de la Vivacité*, a lively and facetious Diſpoſition, is the only Paſſport which, among the French Ladies, will enſure the Party a gracious Reception. Whoever has it not, is far from being acceptable in the Generality of French Companies; where, as the Ladies ſit Umpires, they who are deficient in what they deem the moſt neceſſary Requiſite, will make but a very indifferent Figure.

Hence tho' we ſerious, grave Engliſhmen are by no means undervalued, among the French Gentlewomen, who know how to ſet a full and proper Eſtimation on our reſpective Merit, yet they are ever accuſing us of being perpetually plunged in a Reverie, from which nothing can totally extricate us.

Their

THEIR Accuſation, however, falls erroneouſly on Numbers of our Countrymen, who are as jocund and airy as the merrieſt and moſt lively of their own. But then the Gaiety of an Engliſhman is only occaſional, the *toujours gay* is peculiar to a Frenchman : and it is worth obſerving, that ſuch a Diſpoſition is ſo very far from being cogenial to the former, that an Affectation of it is the great *Pierre d'Achoppement*, the ſure ſtumbling Block of our young Engliſh Travellers ; as an Engliſhman, indeed, a Man of any Nation, always appears to the beſt Advantage, when he ſhews himſelf as he really is, and ſeeks not to ſet himſelf off by foreign Airs unnatural to his Temper and Inclination ; and which only lay him open to Ridicule, by the Aukwardneſs of his Endeavours to imitate Originals, of which Nature never deſigned him for a Copy.

To return to our *Abbés*, they are like Gay's Univerſal Apparition, preſent every where. The Reaſon of which is obvious, being ſought after by moſt People, on various Accounts, as they are equally Men of Buſineſs and Pleaſure, not leſs expert in the

the moſt ſerious Tranſactions, than fond of enjoying their Share of whatever occupies the gay World. Hence they diligently frequent all public Spectacles, which are thought incomplete without them; as they compoſe the moſt intelligent Part of the Company, and are the moſt weighty Approvers or Condemners of what paſſes in almoſt all Places.

CERTAIN it is, that they are, in many Reſpects, not only the Inſpectors, but the Cenſors General of the Land: and that the Judgements which flow from their Tribunals are commonly very deciſive; more perhaps than ſome Perſonages of very elevated Stations would ſuffer them to be, if their Power extended to the Controulment of the Underſtanding.

CHAP. IX.

IT is principally from the *Abbés* the French Ladies receive their Inſtructions; and between them both an oracular Coalition (if one may ſo term it) is formed, that pronounces the Fate of every Kind of Production.

In no Part of the World whatever are Books and Literature more welcome among the Fair Sex than in France, where many a Lady's Library makes no unvoluminous Appearance; and what is more to the Purpoſe, where many a one is as ſolicitous to read Books as to purchaſe them. To the Honour of Women of Faſhion here it may without Flattery be ſaid, that great Numbers of them have found the valuable Secret of reconciling Pleaſure with Improvement; the latter of which, even with ſome of the moſt youthful and airy, ſeems not in leſs Requeſt than the former.

THEIR Education contributes powerfully to give them this happy Turn. As they are brought up in Convents, Books are often the only Refuge they have from Silence and Tedioufneſs; and as they are generally endowed with lively Parts, they cannot fail to improve them by this beſt of all Methods, which is rendered the more effectual by the Time Solitude affords them to reflect and ponder on what they read. Hence there are few Women (in regard of intellectual Accompliſhments) to compare with the French Ladies who have been educated in Convents; to ſay nothing of the Regularity of the Life lead there, and the Principles of Virtue which are ſo carefully inculcated in thoſe uſeful Receſſes from the Idleneſs and Diſſipation of the World, where, notwithſtanding the eſtabliſhed Prevalence of many ſuperſtitious Practices, it were highly injurious to deny that the utmoſt Pains are taken to form the Mind, and lay the Foundation of every laudable Accompliſhment: a Truth, it may be added, that too often induces Proteſtant Parents to ſend their Children to France for Education, in Defiance of the many political as well as religious

religious Conſiderations, that ſhould deter them.

An addiction to the ſeverer Studies cannot well be ſuppoſed in the Fair Sex: but the polite and elegant, and all that is underſtood by the *belles Lettres* many of them are amazingly converſant in. This is moſt agreeably experienced by all who have the Pleaſure of a diffuſive acquaintance among the French Ladies; as it is at the ſame Time a no leſs rational, than moſt charming Inducement for Men of Senſe and Merit to court and cultivate ſo inchanting a Society.

This Happineſs is far from difficult to obtain: Foreigners of good Behaviour and properly recommended, are admitted into the beſt Companies with no leſs Facility than their own People.

It were, indeed, to be wiſhed that many of our young Gentlemen would take more Pains to procure themſelves a Footing in ſome of their genteel Families, they could then, on returning among their

Countrymen, give a more ſatisfactory Account of their Time than their Employment of it while abroad, enables them generally to do. Inſtead of the ſupercilious, unjuſt Contempt they often affect to diſplay for the Characters they have ſeen, or rather, indeed, pretend to have ſeen in foreign Parts, they would enjoy the pleaſurable Recollection of many worthy Perſons of both Sexes, whoſe agreeable Company and Converſation proved the fortunate Means of preſerving them from the many Inconveniencies, to ſay no worſe, into which the Inconſiderateneſs of our travelling Youth, in the Choice of the Society they frequent, ſo often and ſometimes ſo fatally hurries them. A Society too commonly made up of thoſe Adventurers who lie on the Catch for wealthy young Travellers, and of thoſe other Members of the Community, a total Retrenchment of whom is not leſs deſirable than next to impracticable.

NEITHER is it improper to recommend a particular Acquaintance and Intimacy with ſuch of the *Abbes* as are Perſons of Parts and Character.

Character. They will learn, through their Means, whatever is fit for a Gentleman to know; and as many of them are in eaſy Circumſtances, and Men of Addreſs and genteel Qualifications, and very often of diſtinguiſhed Families, they will ſerve them as Introductors into the beſt Houſes; not to mention their Readineſs and Complaiſance in the moſt unbounded Communication of whatever falls under their Cognizance; a Diſpoſition for which the French are commonly very remarkable, and which is certainly a cogent Reaſon why Foreigners who ſeek for Inſtruction ſhould be deſirous of aſſociating with a People who are ſo liberal in admitting others to a Participation of their Knowledge; and ſo entirely above the Affectation of appearing myſterious and reſerved; a vice of which the French are as little guilty as any People in the World.

And to this their Willingneſs to oblige, on all thoſe Emergencies, which, though not productive of any pecuniary Inconvenience to themſelves, are ſtill Proofs of a kind and benevolent Nature. In theſe Exer-

tions of their good Humour and Affability, they are an Example to all Mankind; and it is but doing them the ſtricteſt Juſtice to acknowledge that they manifeſt the moſt unfeigned Alacrity when engaged in the Service or Information of Strangers; of the Engliſh eſpecially, of whoſe eſteem and approbation they ſeem evidently prouder than of other Nations; a Circumſtance which ought undoubtedly to induce us to beſtow as much of our good will and gratitude upon them, as is conſiſtent with the Duty we owe to our Country.

Some of the Engliſh it muſt be confeſt are apt to carry this Remembrance of paſt Courteſies to very immoderate Lengths, and to become ſo enamoured of France and its Inhabitants, as to forget the ſuperior Ties that bind them to their own Nation; and in the Enthuſiaſm of their attachment to that Country, are ſo laviſh and profuſe in its praiſes, as to prefer it to their own, even in thoſe Things wherein its Inferiority is apparent.

THIS, however, is a Fault of which our Engliſh Travellers are not often guilty: the Generality of them being much more inclined to err on the oppoſite Side; and inſtead of ſuffering themſelves to be dazzled by the Luſtre of the good Qualities the French poſſeſs, are on the contrary, ſtudious to diſcover, and quick-eyed in perceiving wherein they are deſerving of Cenſure.

THIS neceſſary Inquiry ſhould alſo have its Turn; but for that very Reaſon every impartial Obſerver ſhould conſider it as a real, indiſpenſible Duty, to repreſent them in as amiable Colours as Truth allows of and requires.

SUCH a Method alone is to be purſued, when we would travel to any Purpoſe. By impreſſing us with a due Admiration and Reſpect, for the peculiar Excellencies of a Nation, it inſenſibly creates an Habit of cheriſhing praiſeworthy Qualifications, wherever we find them: and diminiſhes that ferocious Antipathy, fatally too common between Individuals

of divers Countries; whoſe unaccountable Prepoſſeſſions againſt each other would gradually ſubſide, and loſe themſelves at laſt in a laudable Spirit of Emulation, were they not ungenerouſly, and, one may venture to affirm, criminally fomented by thoſe, who from that Conviction of their Perniciouſneſs which Education, and Experience of the World produce; ought ſincerely to wiſh and ſeriouſly to labour for their Suppreſſion.

CHAP. X.

THERE is a Claſs of Men in France, who perhaps ſhould have preceded the Mention of the *Abbes*, theſe are the Gentlemen of the Army; who here, as well as in all abſolute Monarchies, are the main Pillar of the Government, and the true Coloſſus that exalts Royalty above all other Conſiderations, and renders it independent of Reaſon, Laws, and Equity.

BUT while thus compelled by their Office and military Duty to be the Abettors of Tyranny in its utmoſt Latitude, it cannot be denied they are, in all other Reſpects, Men of as much Honour and Principle as any in the Kingdom.

THEIR Profeſſion being held the moſt honourable of any in France, we need not wonder it is ſo amazingly crowded. Whoever has no Inclination to enter upon the Liſt of *Abbes*, and yet is ambitious to lead a genteel Life, embraces the Profeſſion of Arms.

IT is remarkable that in a decent reputable Family, one Member muſt of courſe be devoted to the Service of the King; another to that of the Church; and the next to the Law. This is meant of the ſecondary Claſſes. As to thoſe of the *premiere Volee* the prime Rate, the Army and Church only are worthy of their Thoughts; and the Option lies ſolely between theſe two. As for Commerce it never enters into the Conceptions, either of the firſt or ſecond Degrees of People

in this Country. A Circumſtance which no thinking Engliſhman will lament.

THE Education of thoſe who are deſtined for a military Life, is not much nor long confined to the Limits of a College. As ſoon as a Commiſſion can be procured, the Youth is taken from his Studies, and initiated at once in all the Liberty and Licentiouſneſs too unfortunately attending the Vocation of a Soldier.

THOUGH it muſt not be denied that the Generality of the French Officers are Men of Integrity, and deſerving by their Behaviour the Appellation of Gentlemen, yet it muſt alſo be allowed that the younger Sort are perhaps the wildeſt, and the moſt addicted to the Irregularities of Youth of any of their Age and Profeſſion throughout all Europe.

AS they are uſually Perſons of Birth, and full of thoſe Prejudices that are ſo current among all who glory in the Name of Nobleſſe, they think it incumbent on them to keep their Character

ſpotleſs and unſullied by the leaſt Deviation from the Path of Honour; a very narrow one in France. where the numberleſs Punctilios that are neceſſary to be obſerved, render the Conduct of a Man of Faſhion ſometimes a Taſk of no ſmall difficulty to manage with Prudence and Propriety.

But if among Perſons of Years and Diſcretion, the fiery Temper of the Nation is apt often to occaſion very ſerious Differences, it is much worſe among the youthful Part that belongs to the Military Liſt; Where Altercations and Quarrels ſucceed each other with uninterrupted Rapidity; and where Lives are daily thrown away in the moſt wanton, ignominious Manner, and with a Paſſiveneſs in thoſe who ought to prevent ſuch Miſchief that is wholly inexcuſable: ſince no Pretext can juſtify the conniving at Individuals, making their Appeal to the Sword in private Diſputes. The only Motive that ever has been pleaded, is the Neceſſity of preſerving a high ſtrain of perſonal Courage and Reſolution among

Individuals

Individuals whoſe Duty it is to look upon Life with Indifference.

But this Argument falls to the Ground, when we reflect that this barbarous Cuſtom was utterly unknown to the Greeks and the Romans, on whoſe Valour it were impertinent here to make any Encomium. The Turks, indiſputably as brave a People as any in modern Ages, far from looking on it as any Proof of Intrepidity, give it its proper Name, by calling it the Height of Madneſs and Infatuation.

But as this Subject will be inlarged upon hereafter, ſuffice it now to obſerve that more Swords are drawn among the young Officers in France, than among all the other Gentlemen of their Profeſſion in Europe. This will excite no Surprize when it is conſidered that, excluſive of thoſe abſurd Notions of Honour which compel them, in a Manner, to expoſe themſelves to Deſtruction on the moſt frivolous Pretences, the Vanity that annexes ſo much intrinſic Merit to their Employment, is ever ſtimulating them to

make

make a Diſplay of their Spirit, and almoſt to ſeek Occaſions of convincing the World they are Men of Courage. Add to this the Aſcendancy which the Military is encouraged by the Government to aſſume in all Companies, and upon all Emergencies. A Priviledge one may well imagine they are ready enough to maintain; none more than they, whoſe Youth and Inexperience leaſt entitled them to ſuch Preſumption. But theſe are preciſely the moſt unſupportable of any; and neither Ignorance nor Incapacity can reſtrain them from the utmoſt Stretches of Impertinence and upſtart Pride: which however, meet but too often with the ſevereſt Chaſtiſement.

From all theſe Conſiderations it is evident that the Condition of a Military Man in France, is far from being enviable in the Eye of Reaſon: and that the French Army, may, with the ſtricteſt Truth, be termed a Field of inceſſant Danger; where, from the Native Warmth and Impetuoſity of the Nation, together with the

the falſe Maxims held up for the Guidance of all who aſpire at the Appellation of Men of Honour, and induſtriouſly propagated by the ruling Members of that numerous Part of the Community, a young Gentleman of any Reflexion muſt of conſequence, be very unhappy, when he coolly ponders on what a ſmall Thread his Exiſtence is hourly depending.

AFTER viewing what is diſadvantagious and gloomy let us, on the other Hand, acknowledge that there is not a more reſpectable body of Men in France, than the generality of their Officers, when they have once paſt what Shakeſpear ſo emphatically ſtiles the "Hey Day of Blood." Politeneſs and good Breeding are found among them in the completeſt perfection; and they are uſually Perſons of the moſt refined Behaviour, and repleniſhed with Sentiments of the moſt real, genuine Honour: not only that which means a Spirit above ſuffering the leaſt Affront or Indignity, but that more uſeful exaltedneſs of Mind which is founded on good Senſe, and a comprehenſive knowledge

ledge of Juſtneſs and Propriety: and which admits of no Immorality in Conduct, nor Indecency in Manners. Such, without Flattery, is the true Character of by far the Majority of the Seniors in the French Service; which it may not be amiſs to take Notice is far from lucrative: a common Obſervation among them, being that a French Officer is uſually ruined, and an Engliſh one inriched in the Service of his Country.

The Juniors in the French Army, ſo far as regards Temper and Moderation, are conformably to what has been obſerved intirely the Reverſe of their Elders: haughty, violent, imperious, and moſt eaſily affronted, unleſs a Man is very cautious in his Selection of them, he runs a perpetual Riſque of his Life. In all other Matters they fully deſerve the Name of Gentlemen. The noble mindedneſs of ſuch as are in affluent Circumſtances is peculiarly remarkable: and there is, perhaps, no Claſs of People wherein more frequent Inſtances of the moſt friendly and diſintereſted Generoſity are daily exhibited.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

THERE are no Individuals in France who ſeem more elated with their Condition and Appearance, than thoſe who are decorated with the Order of St. Louis. Tho' generally the Proof, as well as the Badge of Military Merit (to ſerve as a Recompence for which, in default of more ſolid and ſubſtantial Rewards, it was originally deviſed) yet there was a Time, not remote from its Inſtitution, when a very trifling Sum, indeed was adequate to the Purchaſe. This happened during Chamillard's Miniſtry, in the latter Period of Lewis the fourteenth's Reign; when it ſhould not be forgot, that even the Rank and Priviledges of *Nobleſſe* were not leſs openly put to Sale, at no exorbitant Price. Theſe are Incidents that have done irreparable Damage to both theſe Modes of Honour, by diminiſhing their Value, in Proportion to the Meanneſs of the pecuniary Conſideration they were rated at: a circumſtance well remembered to this Day, and often cited by thoſe who are no Friends to theſe

theſe imaginary Diſtinctions; as looking upon them with Reaſon, from their perpetual Proſtitution, to be no real Criterion of Deſert.

WELL, therefore, may an Engliſhman (as the French complain is often the Caſe) hold in the utmoſt Contempt and Deriſion, Honours which he poſſeſſes Money ſufficient to purchaſe perhaps a hundred fold.

THESE Knights of St. Louis are almoſt equal in Number to a little Army; and ſwarm, like the Abbés, in all Places and Aſſemblies. They are allowed, almoſt every where, the *haut Bout*, the firſt and beſt Place. Perſons of all Degrees think themſelves honoured by their Acquaintance and Frequentation; and the fair Sex, eſpecially, is fond of their Attendance. It is principally on public Occaſions, ſuch as great Meetings and Feſtivals, that one may be witneſs how powerfully the *Inſignia* of this Order can operate. While Crouds of Perſons, moſt genteely dreſt, and Gentlemen to all Appearance, ſollicit in vain for Admittance into the Choir,

or

or ſome other conſpicuous Place, a ſingle Word from one of theſe *Croix*, Croſſes as they are ſtiled, will make the Gates fly open for his immediate Reception, without the leaſt Heſitation whatever.

OTHER Inſtances of more Importance might be produced, as undeniable Proofs of their Influence and Authority. One may frequently ſee the moſt violent Buſtle and Agitation of a Mob quieted inſtantly by the Interpoſition of one of them, in a Manner that completely anſwers thoſe celebrated Lines of Virgil, that repreſent the quelling of a Tumult.

FROM a moſt earneſt Deſire to figure in the Liſt of theſe *Chevaliers* (which, whatever Jeſts Foreigners may think proper to make on it, intitles a Man to very great Reſpect, as the above-mentioned Examples fully demonſtrate) and from ſundry other Motives very urgent with Men ſo enamoured with exterior Splendor as the French uſually are, originates that almoſt univerſal Propenſity of the Cadets, younger Sons of wealthy Families in France, to embrace the mili-

military Profeſſion: being that wherein they can improve to the higheſt Advantage that Fund of Oſtentatiouſneſs ſo common to all the Natives; as Dreſs and external Brilliancy of all Denominations claim this as their peculiar Field of Action.

FIRED with theſe Views, ſo inchanting to a Frenchman, hither the Youth of France croud from all Quarters, giving up, without Regret, all thoſe Proſpects of Profit and Intereſt that Commerce and the other lucrative Vocations afford. The more flattering Certainty of arriving at immediate Notice and Conſideration outweighs, with them, the diſtant, however well-grounded, Hopes of Eaſe and Affluence by the Means of Trade; which, even in its moſt inviting and honourable Light, that of a *Negociant*, a Merchant, is not able to adminiſter to their Vanity in the ſame Proportion as a Suit of Regimentals. This, in their Opinion, exalts a Man over all other Degrees of Subjects; and is, in a young Frenchman's Apprehenſions, an Acquiſition equal to the *Palma nobilis* which *Terrarum Dominos evehit ad Deos*, the golden Prize that lifts him up

from his original Obſcurity, and ſets him on a Level with the beſt Men in the Land.

And truly a French Officer's Pretenſions, in theſe Reſpects, are very far from ideal only. If he looks on no Condition as above his own, and thinks no Company whatever too good for him, there is not, on the other Hand, any Claſs of Individuals hardy enough to avow a Belief of their ſuperior Importance; and no Company, however diſinclined, dares manifeſt an Averſion to his Society. Thus prompted by his own Forwardneſs, and encouraged by the concurrent Approbation or rather, to expreſs it properly, the univerſal Hommage of all People, he enjoys, without the leaſt Check, that Plenitude of Conſequence which Pride cheriſhes in his Imagination, and which is ſtill more effectually ſupported and realized by the favourable Attention ſo readily paid by the ruling Powers in France, to the Concerns of all who are inveſted with a military Character, not only the moſt honoured, but what is more eſſential, the ſecureſt of any Station in Life, againſt the oppreſſive Spirit of the Government; which,

in

in abſolute Monarchies, is always bound to caſt an Eye of Reſpect and Predilection on thoſe belonging to the Army, that neceſſary Friend to Deſpotiſm, whoſe Exertion in all good Conſtitutions, is never directed but abroad, and can never be felt at Home, without becoming an Inſtrument of Tyranny.

CHAP. XII.

NEXT to the Military, are the Gownſmen and Lawyers, a wealthy and innumerable Claſs of Men. But the Profeſſion, tho' certainly deſerving in itſelf of the higheſt Reverence, is rather creditable than honourable in France; and it is with Difficulty that Perſons of the firſt Figure therein can procure themſelves nuptial Alliances with noble Families. This is owing to that Gothic Prejudice that only the Sword can dignify a Man. A Notion which, even

in theſe enlightened Times, is ſtill amazingly prevalent in moſt Parts of Europe, chiefly thoſe from whence Liberty is baniſhed; as this Excluſion is uſually attended by that of the moſt valuable of all its Concomitants, Juſtneſs of Reaſoning, which is an Happineſs rarely known where Thoughts have not a boundleſs Freedom.

MANY of the Gownſmen in France are Perſons of great Learning, and as often of the moſt exemplary Integrity: devoting their whole Time and Abilities to the Service of the Public, without any other Views than thoſe of the moſt conſummate Patriotiſm. Such a Teſtimony they are juſtly intitled to, after the noble and truly heroic Oppoſition which, a few Years ſince, all Europe admired how they durſt attempt to make againſt the lawleſs Omnipotence of a proud and arbitrary Court, enraged at the ſmalleſt Diſputation of its Authority, and ſtruck with equal Surprize and Indignation that ſo much Reſolution ſhould be ſhewn in thwarting Meaſures it had not leſs the Means than the Will and Determination to inforce, in ſpite of any legal Stand.

ELO-

Eloquence ſeems much more to be attended to in the French Courts of Judicature than in ours; where ſolid, ſterling, tho' unadorned Senſe appears more welcome. It muſt nevertheleſs be confeſt that if the Precepts and Examples of Cicero and Demoſthenes were more obſerved in the Engliſh courts, they would certainly prove of no Detriment to Truth and Reaſon.

In conſequence of this ſuperior Addiction to the Arts of Oratory, it may, it is preſumed, be affirmed that ſaving that Boldneſs of Thought and Expreſſion, whereof a a greater Meaſure will always be found in a Land of Liberty, there is, perhaps, more Entertainment for an Admirer of claſſical and regular Oratory in the Palais at Paris, than in Weſtminſter-hall at London. In the former of theſe Places our Attention is engaged by the Art and Elegance of Compoſition manifeſt in all their Pleadings, which make always their principal Appeal to the Imagination, and are therefore clad in all the Ornaments of rhetorical Ingenuity: while in our Courts, however ſtrong and powerful the Arguments, and however pro-

per and appoſite the Words may be which convey them, ſtill there is evidently a Neglect of that Elocution, and thoſe almoſt nameleſs Graces, whoſe Concomitance adds Influence and Dignity to the ſoundeſt Reaſoning; and of which, tho' an Auditor may not be able to define them, he ſtill feels the Operation and Efficacy.

THE Members of the Law in France, are no leſs expert in the Arts of thriving and raiſing immenſe Fortunes than their Brethren in other Parts, and enjoy a Share of Riches not unequal to what falls to the Lot of the ſame Profeſſion in England: like whom too they are remarkably ſubject to that Envy and popular Malevolence which Wealth, acquired through the mere Folly of Mankind, renders the Poſſeſſors liable to experience from the Multitude.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

THERE is a Caſt of People in France, which, tho' yielding Precedence to the Lawyers, are incomparably ſuperior to them in the Article of Riches: and who may not improperly be ſaid to amaſs them by ſerving their Royal Maſter with their Pen. This, however, is not to be underſtood of thoſe Legions of mercenary Writers who proſtitute their Talents in the Support of Tyranny, and labour to oppreſs and fetter the Mind, while others keep the Body in Subjection. Theſe, doubtleſs are numerous in France, as well as in all Countries where the Principles of Deſpotiſm are triumphant. The Tribe meant here is compoſed of quite another Kind of Individuals, who tho' they aſſiſt as much, if not more than the former, in the Work of public Oppreſſion, are much better paid for it; and may be ſaid to riot in the Spoils of their Country, while the others are glad to compound for a very ſcanty Pittance.

THE Gentlemen here ſpoken of are the *Maltotiers et Gens de Finance*, Tax-gatherers, and Officers of the Revenue, who are indiſputably the richeſt People in the Nation. It is incredible with what Rapidity they arrive at prodigious Wealth; and whatever Induſtry is exerted by the ableſt Adepts in the other gainful Departments, it is far ſurpaſſed by the Dexterity the former are Maſters of. Neither is it leſs ſurprizing with what Splendor they dare enjoy theſe equally dazzling and ſudden Fortunes, the whole Realm being ſenſible that it is purely through the Miſmanagement, the Indolence, or the Connivance of its Governors, that ſuch a Plunder of the Nation is carried on: as it were no difficult Matter, by a due Enquiry into the Methods of levying the public Revenue, to correct the Enormities that have been ſo long permitted in them, and to ſettle this Province of the Political Syſtem on a much more beneficial Plan.

IN this Inſtance, evidently more than in any other, France is continually made a Victim to the moſt audacious and moſt barefaced Spirit of Jobbing. It is a notorious Truth

Truth that no European State has ſuffered more from a miſunderſtood or an ill-conducted Arrangement of its Finances. There are but two Periods in the Hiſtory of that Kingdom, when they can ſtrictly be ſaid to have been well adminiſtered. The firſt was during the Reign of Henry the fourth, when, under the Auſpices of that great patriot King, they were, through the Diligence and Abilities of the celebrated Sully, retrieved from that horrible Confuſion a Civil War of half a Century had thrown them into. The ſecond followed after the Lapſe of no leſs an Interval, and was due to the illuſtrious Colbert; under whoſe Miniſtry were formed thoſe ſalutary Schemes that made France ſo reſpectable to all its Neighbours. But they terminated with his Life; and long before the End of his Maſter Lewis the fourteenth's Reign, Miſery and Deſolation had overſpread the Face of the whole Kingdom. Since thoſe Days little has been done to remedy the Miſchiefs occaſioned through want of Oeconomy and good Order. Projects and Syſtems of divers Kinds have had their Turn; but to no other Purpoſe than to render People very ſuſpicious of all who had

had any to propoſe. Inſtead of coming to any fixed Settlement in theſe Matters, Shifts and Expedients have been adopted ſucceſſively, according to the Temper and Capacity of the Miniſters: and tho' they have all been unanimous enough in loading the Subject to his utmoſt Bearing, yet the ſame ruinous Modes of collecting the Impoſts ſtill remain, and none have been bold or ſagacious enough to attempt the carrying of any others into Execution.

This, however, is a Subject whereon ſo much has already been, though much more might be ſaid, that one may diſmiſs it with this ſingle Remark, that if in England, a free State, where no Money is raiſed but with the Conſent of the Nation, and where the Iſſuing out and Employment of it are ſo narrowly inſpected by all Parties; if in Defiance of all the Precautions ſo minutely ordained by the Legiſlature, Frauds, Colluſions, and Embezzlements can ſtill find Admittance, what muſt it be where Government is exerciſed by Caprice? Where a few Individuals are inveſted with the uncontroulable Direction of the whole; where ſecret

Intrigues

Intrigues are the *primum mobile* that ſet the political Machine in Motion; where the public Good is ſo far from being the uſual Object in View, that it is often not even made a Pretence; where the Court and its Adherents are the ſole Actors; where the royal Power, like a bottomleſs Gulph, abſorbs all the Strength and Vigour of the Realm, and may be likened to the monſtrous Head of a diſproportionate Body, whoſe neceſſary Nouriſhment is drained away by every poſſible Channel, for the ſole Support of that unwieldy Part, which, tho' it may diſplay a florid Appearance itſelf, leaves all the other Members in a State of Debility?

These Incidents, one may add, ought frequently to be preſent to the Mind of an Engliſhman, who feels a ſincere Warmth of Affection to his Country. They will contribute to confirm his Attachment to its Conſtitution; as it is impoſſible for a reaſonable Man to obſerve the vaſt Difference ſubſiſting between it and that of France, without commiſerating the Caſe of ſuch as live under the latter, and firmly reſolving never to be acceſſory, or ſubmit to the Introduction of it among us.

CHAP-

CHAP. XIV.

THE French *Nobleſſe* (we ſhould not call it Nobility, the Meaning of which Word is of far higher Import) are a numerous and formidable Body of Individuals. By formidable is meant only to the lower Sort, over whom they are moſt ſhamefully allowed to tyranniſe, being otherwiſe as ſubmiſſive and ſubjected to the Government as any other Frenchmen, without the leaſt Exception of the higheſt and moſt dignified among them, ſo far as relates to paſſive Obedience and Non-reſiſtance to the Will and Injunctions of the Court, of which, indeed, they are the chief Supporters and Champions on every Occſiaon.

As an Encouragement and Reward for this Devotion and Zeal, which they ſeize every Opportunity to teſtify, they enjoy ſeveral Immunities that ſerve not a little to inhance the Notions of their Self-importance; and at the ſame Time to excite the Envy of the *Bourgeois* and the *Roturiers*,

Names

Names they indiſcriminately beſtow on all their Inferiors; tho' the former belongs uſually but to reputable Commoners, and the latter is only applicable to what we call the Vulgar.

VANITY, carried to its moſt abſurd and ridiculous Exceſs, ſeems to be the Foible of all the French *Nobleſſe*. Many of our own are apt to commit ſuch Follies as betray a far greater Perſuaſion of the intrinſic Merit of their Rank than is conſiſtent with Reaſon. A Failing chiefly remarkable in thoſe who have been much abroad, and have imbibed the erroneous Ideas that are ſo prevalent and ſo powerfully authorized by the Example and Countenance of Perſons in Power. But whatever the Errors may be to which our own Nobility are liable, they are nothing to the proud and haughty Behaviour of the French Nobles, and the Contempt wherein they hold their Inferiors.

THE *Nobleſſe*, in France, may be divided into *haute et baſſe*, high and low. The firſt of theſe Epithets is common: the other not unknown, but rather not much inſiſted on,

or uſed; as it is accompanied with a diminutive Idea, and would ſound harſh in the Ears of many a French Noble; who has often very little more than the empty Sound itſelf to feed his Imagination with. The Diviſion, however, is not the leſs real. By the *haute Nobleſſe* is always meant Perſons of great Birth or great Titles. Great Opulence is not a neceſſary Adjunct. By the *baſſe Nobleſſe* is underſtood new made Nobles; Nobles by their Employments, or ſuch Noble Families whoſe Titles are of the loweſt Order, and who have never made any Figure.

The Degree of Pride in France, ariſing from Anceſtry, bears a Medium between that of Germany (where it is a Merit of the firſt Magnitude) and that of England; where good Senſe regulates our Notions in that Reſpect, and teaches us to eſteem a Man rather for following the Footſteps of his illuſtrious Forefathers than merely for owing to them his Origin.

Nobleness of Blood, in France, is an invincible Protection from the Inſults and Slight

Slight of the Vulgar, who are early taught to reverence their Superiors without Meaſure; and to act, on all Occaſions, with the moſt boundleſs Deference and Condeſcenſion in whatever relates to them.

HOWEVER penurious the Circumſtances of a Noble may be, or however inſignificant his perſonal Character, yet his Company is always acceptable among his Equals, who think it incumbent on them to ſhew him their good Will, and lend him their Aſſiſtance to the utmoſt of their Abilities, and never heſitate to eſpouſe his Cauſe in caſe of any Difference with ſuch as are of a ſubordinate Condition.

AMONG theſe the Society of a Noble is courted with a Warmth, and often a Servility that ſhews how extravagantly it is valued. Tho' certainly it ſeldom happens that any Benefit is derived from it: the uſual Motives that induce the *Nobleſſe* to aſſociate with the lower Ranks being thoſe of Intereſt. Such as commanding a ſtanding unceremonious Welcome to a plentiful Table: the obtaining a pecuniary Loan, or a rich Wife, and other Views of the like Nature.

BUT

But the greateſt and moſt valuable Prerogative of the French *Nobleſſe* is the prompt Introduction it procures them to the unfeigned Notice of Men in Power; who being themſelves Members of the ſame Body, and violently partial in its Favour, never ſcruple to decide with the utmoſt Peremptorineſs againſt all other Rivals for ſuch Poſts of Honour or Profit as may, without derogating from their Dignity, be exerciſed or enjoyed by Nobles.

Few, indeed, are they who poſſeſs any Employments of Conſequence, and are at the ſame Time Perſons of ignoble Extraction, and ſuch as have riſen by Dint of pure Merit. The Jealouſy of the *Nobleſſe* in ſuffering none but themſelves to arrive at Places of Eminence is ever on the watch; and they eſteem it an Indignity offered to their Characters, when ſuch Individuals are placed on a Parity of Rewards and Notice with them.

One Thing is very deſerving of Remark not only among People of Quality, but alſo among other Ranks in France; that is the Magnifi-

Magnificence they all affect to diſplay in their Coats of Arms. Whether Nobles or Commoners it is all one. Coronets and Supporters are promiſcuouſly the Claim of both, and a Foreigner (an Engliſhman particularly) is often perplexed how to diſtinguiſh a *Bourgeois* from the *Nobleſſe*, as in England none but the Nobility pretend to Coronets and Supporters.

When we conſider how tenacious the French *Nobleſſe* are of their Priviledges, and the Diſtance at which they keep their Inferiors, in all other Reſpects, it is abſolutely ſurprizing they ſhould not, after the Example of our Nobility, have found Means to confine theſe armorial Diſtinctions to their own Body.

It may, however, be added, that this fooliſh Preſumption reaches much farther than France. It is not uncommon, even in London, for Perſons tranſplanted hither from abroad, to uſe the moſt ſplendid Arms on their Seals; tho' they may have Diſcretion enough to abſtain from the Abſurdity of painting them on their Coaches. The

whole Continent of Europe is pretty guilty of this Infatuation: Holland itſelf not excepted; tho' a Country where empty Pageantry is leſs in Vogue than any where. Yet here there are not a few (chiefly indeed the Deſcendants of ſuch as fled for Refuge from other Parts to this Spot of Security from Oppreſſion) who have inherited the Vanity of their Anceſtors in this Particular.

CHAP. XV.

IN no Country whatever are they who poſſeſs pecuniary Independance more careſt and courted than in France. Hence none are ſo much reſpected there as the Engliſh; who carry with them, wherever they go, the infallible Means of procuring themſelves a diſtinguiſhed Reception.

BUT notwithſtanding the vain exaggerated Boaſt of the French, that their Country

is

is *l'Azile des Malheureux*, the Refuge of the Unfortunate, and that *Chacun retrouve chez eux ſa Patrie*, that every Man finds himſelf at home among them; In ſpite of theſe magnificent Encomiums, France cannot be reputed a Country where Foreigners are more welcome to put themſelves on a Level with the Natives than they are in any other.

WHILE Curioſity is the only Motive that leads Perſons thither, their Time will certainly paſs as agreeably as any where, but they muſt not preſume to go further, unleſs they are previouſly reſolved to face the fulleſt Oppoſition to their Pretenſions.

THE French, like all other People, are extremely averſe to Foreigners claiming the Priviledge of Coſmopolitiſm in aſpiring at public Employments among them. But excluſive of thoſe obvious Conſiderations that render this Jealouſy of Strangers natural and univerſal in all Countries, they are, at the ſame Time, much more actuated by Pride than other Nations: as they deem all Places of Emolument or Honour, conferred

upon Foreigners, as ſo many Recompences refuſed to ſuperior Merit among themſelves.

A SCANDALOUS Inſtance of this arrogant Diſpoſition was manifeſted in the Caſe of the great Marſhal Saxe, as well as of his illuſtrious Colleague Marſhal Lowendal; who, notwithſtanding their ſignal Services to the Freneh Nation, could not eſcape its Envy.

FOR this Reaſon, as much as a Stranger is careſt while his Views and Intentions are only thoſe of a mere Traveller, ſo much he becomes an Object of Envy and Hatred, when they are diſcovered to be of a different Nature: for with all their Expreſſions of Eſteem, and Readineſs to ſerve, wherein they ſo ſuperlatively abound, we muſt always allow a Salvo, that nothing is to be required of them which may tend, in any Shape, to ſet us on another Footing than that of Sojourners and Aliens.

IN this Reſpect the national Inhoſpitality of the French is ſo glaringly injurious, that on

on the Death of a Foreigner, all his Effects become immediately the King's Property. This they call *Droit d'aubaine*, which, without falſifying the Senſe, may juſtly be tranſlated, a Right to plunder. It is ſomewhat ſurprizing, that at the Concluſion of our many ſucceſsful Wars with France, the Exiſtence of ſuch a tyrannical and barbarous Practice ſhould have ſlipped the Memory of our Negociators; for ſurely the Profits thence accruing to the Crown, are in their Nature ſo ſhameful and iniquitous, that it cannot be imagined a King would, on a proper Repreſentation, heſitate in aboliſhing ſo ignominious a Cuſtom.

WHILE a foreign Gentleman abſtains from any Attempts that may interfere with their own Purſuits of national Preferment, it muſt be acknowledged the French People of Faſhion are uncommonly deſirous of impreſſing Strangers with the moſt favourable Idea of their Character, by laying themſelves out, to the utmoſt of their Abilities, to furniſh whatever can contribute to their Amuſement and Diverſion. None, in par-

ticular, ſeem to be more taken with Foreigners of Merit than ſuch as are Perſons of a liberal Education ; who teſtify, on all Occaſions, the moſt unfeigned Pleaſure in giving them their Company and Attendance, to the full as much as their own Avocations and Affairs will permit. By ſuch Means they ſeldom fail to gain the Benevolence and good Opinion of Travellers, and to leave in their Minds thoſe profound Traces of Reſpect which, when returned to their own Countries, induce them to mention France in a Stile that incites others toviſit a Nation where they have been ſo agreeably entertained.

It has already been obſerved, that Wit and Learning are infallible Introductors to genteel Society in France. The higheſt and moſt brilliant, to their Honour be it ſaid, are not excepted from the Praiſe of beſtowing this moſt effectual of all Encouragements on literary Worth ; if, indeed, one may not aſſert it is preciſely among them that Men of eminent Parts are moſt in Requeſt. This is a Truth not more experienced by Individuals

of

of eſtabliſhed Reputation among the Natives than by thoſe who come from abroad, whoſe Reception among the French is remarkably to the Credit of the latter; as it proves that whatever political Differences may ſubſiſt between them and other Nations, they have Impartiality enough to lay them aſide in Favour of diſtinguiſhed Merit; and are amply indowed with that Liberality of Mind which conſiders all Mankind as one People in the Republic of Letters.

MEN of Abilities, who have lived in France, are unanimous in bearing this Teſtimony to the Generality of the French: and in expreſſing their Gratitude for the Notice taken of them, not ſeldom ſuperior to that they meet with among their own Countrymen.

A FRENCH Gentleman who had reſided a long Time in England, and was perfectly converſant in our Ways and Notions, uſed often to ſay, that Pope never wrote truer Lines than thoſe wherein he ſpeaks of the Eſtate which Wits inherit after Death, Fame, Honour, and Applauſe. A Recom-

pence which, in his Apprehenſions, was rarely paid in England to a living Author; who commonly paſſes his Days in the moſt mortifying Obſcurity; but, to make him ſome Amends, as ſoon as he is dead, receives every Kind of Honour that can be ſhewn to his Remains. *On le neglige durant ſa Vie, mais on l'enterre à Weſtminſter:* he is neglected during Life, but he is buried at Weſtminſter.

THO' there may be ſome Truth in the Strictures of this Frenchman, yet his ill Humour might probably ariſe from Diſappointments in his own Views, and from not having met with the Rewards he thought fairly due to his Merits. Moſt certainly his Repreſentation of Things is exaggerated; there being few, if any, Votaries of Literature in England of acknowledged Abilities who have Cauſe to complain of the Severity of their Fate, while they act with that Prudence and good Conduct without which no Condition can proſper.

SCIENCES, Literature, and every Branch of Ingenuity are unqueſtionably held in the higheſt

higheſt Repute among the Engliſh: and tho' poſſibly their Profeſſors may not boaſt of ſo familiar an Admittance among the Great, as is uſual in France, yet on the whole it may be confidently affirmed, that the Profits ariſing from the Exertion of Wit and Genius are not inferior, if indeed not incomparably ſuperior, to what they are in that Kingdom.

THE Reaſon why Men of Letters are not, perhaps, ſo much ſought after by our great People is perceptible in the Nature of our Government; whoſe republican Principles inſpire the Proprietors of great Eſtates with ſuch Notions of their Importance as are perpetually ſtimulating them to an Exerciſe of it, which is often incompatible with an Indulgence in thoſe Amuſements that employ ſo conſiderable a Portion of the Time of the French Nobility; whoſe Thoughts have more Leiſure for the *Noctes Cœnæque Deum*. Whereas our Grandees are continually immerſed in Intrigues of State, and conſequently have not an equal Share of Attention to beſtow on thoſe Avocations that are ſo dear to Men of Fortune in France.

ANOTHER

ANOTHER, and perhaps the principal Reaſon is, that moſt of the Paſtimes of the Great in England are of ſuch a Nature, and ſo conducted, that no Perſon can engage in them who is not poſſeſt of Affluence; not to forget, at the ſame Time, that their Diverſions are often intended as the Means and Occaſions of carrying on their political Schemes.

CHAP. XVI.

ONE of the greateſt Inconveniences attending a plain Engliſh Gentleman in France, is that Round of Compliments wherein he is perfectly bewildered. He is like a Town beſieged, and deficient in Ammunition: for he is ſo *accablé*, as they well call it, that is, ſo overwhelmed with verbal Civilities, on all Sides and Emergences, that he finds himſelf quite at a Loſs how to make Head, as it were, and give them ſufficient Returns.

THE

The French Language is, indeed, moſt admirably calculated for theſe Purpoſes; as it has an eaſy Flow, and is abundantly furniſhed with complimentary Phraſes, which to the Natives muſt have ſomething bewitching in the Sound; as one hardly knows ſometimes what Motive to aſſign for their uſing them ſo copiouſly and repeatedly, but the ſole Pleaſure of hearing them.

Without incurring the Accuſation of Cynicism, well may an Engliſhman vent his Spleen at ſuch an Abuſe of Speech. Well may ſo inſipid a Rotation of unmeaning Terms prove equally tireſome and vexatious, when we advert to their endleſs impertinent Intruſion upon all Subjects; and excite our utmoſt Indignation, while, as it is often the Caſe, they ingroſs Converſation ſo far as to exclude almoſt all other Topics.

It was the Praiſe of our Anceſtors, at the Beginning of the laſt Century, that they ſtill retained the Downrightneſs and Simplicity of the primitive Ages, and knew not how, or rather would not (according to the Teſtimony of a cotemporary Author) *deſcendere*

ad

ad Verba imaginariæ Servitutis quæ iſtorum Sæculorum Blandities invenit : condeſcend to make uſe of the ſervile Phraſes of falſe Breeding invented by modern Flattery. Their Spirit was too great for a Submiſſion to that Intercourſe of Falſhood and Adulation which Slavery was introducing every where.

THAT Praiſe ſtill remains in a great Meaſure well founded: and it muſt afford real Satisfaction to all Engliſhmen who have Senſe enough to ſet a proper Value on it, that a late Traveller in our Iſland, Pollnits, who was unqueſtionably a Man of Judgment, takes an approving Notice of the Contempt mere Complimentors are held in among us, and how little we eſteem that ſtudied, or rather affected Stile of Behaviour ſo much in vogue in ſome other Countries; as well as thoſe inſignificant Expreſſions wherewith Diſcourſe is ſo heavily loaded, and which, conſidered in a ſerious Light, are at beſt but Expletives to eke out an inſipid Strain of Speech, tho' they may as often be rightly termed the mean Effuſions of faſhionable Deceit.

NOTWITH-

NOTWITHSTANDING all this Parade of high flown Phraſes, common to all Ranks and Profeſſions in France, we muſt not imagine the French deficient in Sincerity, and its collateral virtues; but rather look upon them in the light of a People whom an Imitation of a modiſh Folly renders much more ridiculous than perverſe.

IF we except courtiers (who are much the ſame in all countries) and thoſe who from a Similitude of Employment are, in a Manner, neceſſitated to put on the Appearance of a Readineſs to oblige, and be ſubſervient to all with whom they have any Concerns, France abounds in Men of the utmoſt Candour and Ingenuouſneſs. The Commonalty, throughout moſt of the Provinces, are a plain, downright Generation, much leſs *ruſé*, ſharp and cunning, than the ordinary Run of our Country People in England. From this Definition, however, we ſhould except the Inhabitants of Normandy, who may, on the other Hand, not unaptly be compared with our Yorkſhiremen, uſually reputed the moſt acute of the Engliſh, as the Normans are of the French.

ONE

One may, however, venture to affirm that our Engliſh Commonalty, tho' far from wanting in Openneſs of Temper aud Honeſty, have perhaps as little Claim as any People to what is commonly meant by Simplicity, when referred to the Practice of former Times. Plainneſs they have; but that and Simplicity are two very different Things. This laſt relates to the Frame of Mind, the other purely to Manners; wherein we have always been noted for aſſuming no Affectation; whereas the firſt carries with it an Idea of Inexperience in the Ways of the World, and of a paſſive Subſerviency to the Notions of others, Attributes not very applicable to any Claſs of Engliſhmen.

From this Commendation of Downrightneſs given to the Majority of the French Country People, and no leſs juſtly due to very great Numbers in other Situations of Life, there is one remarkable Exception, which ought moſt carefully to be remembered by all Foreigners: by Engliſh Travellers particularly, whoſe Purſes, through the Forgetfulneſs of it, are moſt liable to ſuffer, as they are the Mark principally aimed at by

by ſuch as make it their Buſineſs to cozen and over-reach. This Exception is largely found among a numerous Body, thoſe who bear the Name of *Marchands*, Shopkeepers, throughout all France; who are not a whit preferable in Point of unfair Dealing, or rather abſolute and ſhameleſs Impoſition, to the very Dregs of our Populace at Billingſgate. They will, with the cooleſt Effrontery, aſk ten Times the Worth of their Merchandize, and back their Aſſertions of its Goodneſs and Propriety of Price with the moſt unconſcientious Proſtitution of their Character, if People of ſuch a Stamp can pretend to any. Were we to apply the *Punica Fides* to any Set of Men, none deſerve it more than theſe French Shopkeepers, the moſt deſpicable of any that ever aſſumed the Appellation of Merchants.

HENCE it may be, that they in France, who exerciſe what we call Merchandize in England, conſcious of the Ignominy affixed to the Word *Marchands*, from the baſe Practices of thoſe who bear it, have choſen to diſtinguiſh themſelves by a more honourable Title, and are known by that of *Negocians*,

gocians, while that of *Marchands* is reſtricted to Shopkeepers only.

THE French Merchants may be juſtly conſidered as a very reſpectable and worthy Claſs of Men, no ways inferior to our own; from whom, however, they differ in ſeveral Inſtances, in nothing more than the prodigious Hurry ſo many of them are in to exchange that Sphere of Life, for what may be called the Hobby-Horſe of every Frenchman, the Rank and Priviledges of a Noble; which may be purchaſed here at no very high Rate, if the various Informations one daily meets with may be depended on. There are alſo ſundry ſaleable Employments that confer the Right of *Nobleſſe*; but one of the moſt uſual Methods of Initiation into that Body, is by purchaſing what they call the Place of a *grand Secretaire du Roi, Maiſon, Couronne de France*, grand Secretary to the King, Houſe, and Crown of France. This indeed is a Rowland for ones Oliver, if *Vox & præterea Nihil*, high and mighty Words without any Meaning can counterbalance a round Sum of Money. A

French-

Frenchman however, is compleatly ſatisfied with ſuch a Bargain; which, as the Præ-tor's Rod emancipated a Slave among the ancient Romans, frees a Man from that vulgar Appellation *Bourgeois*, ſo hateful to the Ears of a modern Frenchman.

Bourgeois is a Term of Reproach, which every Man is ſure to hear, who is daring enough to enter the Liſts of Altercation, with any one that thinks himſelf by Birth or Office ſecured againſt the Retortion. And yet the Meaning of it, is no other, ſtrictly ſpeaking, than that of a Burgeſs, or rather a Citizen. But whereas no Man in this Iſland of Liberty deems himſelf diſ-graced by being ſo called, in France it is quite otherwiſe; and one may always per-ceive a Self-conſciouſneſs of Inferiority in the Tone and Accent of thoſe who ac-knowledge themſelves Members of that here very little reverenced Fraternity.

Cit, with us, is rather uſed in a jocular Senſe, than as a Degradation; but when-ever the Word *Bourgeois* is in the Mouth of a French Gentleman, it is always intend-

ed as a Stigma, and never underſtood but as an Expreſſion of Contempt; unleſs in legal Proceſſes, political Diſcuſſions, or formal Tranſactions, wherein it appears in its proper genuine Signification of thoſe Claſſes of the Community that are below the Rank of Nobles.

CHAP. XVII.

AMONG the various Foibles which are obvious in the Character of the French, there flows from their complimentary Diſpoſition a ſtrange Love of, and Addiction to Flattery, univerſal from the higheſt to the loweſt Claſſes.

THIS Foible ſeems, in no ſmall Degree, the Reſult of their Modes of Speech, as well as of their Temper and Government.

THE Phraſeology of their Language is perplexed with an endleſs Variety of Circum-

cumlocutions, wherein a Frenchman ſeems to delight, as it were, to loſe himſelf in Purſuit of ſuch as are moſt grateful and ſoothing to the Imagination. His Aim, in ſpeaking, is uſually much more to ſay what may prove acceptable, than what is fit and proper for the Occaſion. The coming at the Truth of Things not being, in his Opinion, a Merit equal to that of procuring the ſatisfaction of thoſe he converſes with.

THIS is the Baſis of that Urbanity (as they term it) prevailing ſo ſuperiorly in France; and which, in the Conception of every Frenchman, is the Fountain from whence Good-breeding is communicated to other Parts. The progreſſive Diffuſion of Politeneſs over the Face of Europe, during the two laſt Centuries, is unqueſtionably due, ſay they, to the Concourſe of the better Sort of Foreigners in their Country; who, conſcious of their own national Deficiency in this Point, have, Time out of Mind, made it a Rule to pay frequent Viſits to France, in order to acquire and preſerve that Engagingneſs of Behaviour and Courteouſneſs of Stile and Addreſs, with

which the ſavage Rudeneſs of other Nations is totally unacquainted.

THESE Pretenſions, bold and preſumptious as they are eſteemed by all judicious Strangers, are of very long ſtanding in France. Before the celebrated Æra of Lewis the Fourteenth, which the French imagine, and firmly believe the whole European World imagines with them, to be the nobleſt and moſt illuſtrious Epocha ever known (far above the Auguſtan Age); before this Time, even ſo remotely as the Commencement of the Reign of Lewis the Thirteenth, a Frenchman of the Order of the Jeſuits, who were then beginning to grow conſiderable in France, in a ſummary Deſcription of the World, written in Latin, has theſe remarkable Words concerning his Country and Countrymen. *Huc, tanquam in veram Humanitatis Scholam, mittitur quotannis ex omnibus Orbis partibus, ſelecta Nobilitas, ut cum Lingua civilem vivendi modum, poſita Barbaria, addiſcat.* Hither, as to the School of true Politeneſs, the Flower of the foreign Nobility is yearly ſent from all Parts of the World, in order, together with its Language,

guage, to learn Good-manners, and diveſt themſelves of their native Barbarity.

But Flattery, among the French, is not limited to the Reciprocation of Blandiſhments to each other, in the daily Round of common Intercourſe. That Spirit of Self-Adulation and Conceit, of which every Nation has its Meaſure, is no where found in a larger Proportion than in France, where the Natives are ever congratulating themſelves, both in their Diſcourſes and Writings, on having the Honour and Felicity of being conſidered as the Models of all their Neighbours in the Cultivation and Refinement of Arts.

This Humour prevailed not leſs in the Days of the afore-cited Jeſuit, than it does at preſent; as amply appears by the fulſome Praiſes he laviſhes on his Countrymen, and the Superiority of Genius and Talents he ſo confidently aſcribes to them in the Sequel of his Performance.

His extravagant Encomiums, however, only prove how ignorant he was, or affect-

ed to be, of the cotemporary State of Learning and Improvements in other Countries: In which latter Caſe nothing can exceed the Impertinence and Partiality he is guilty of, in exalting France above all the reſt of Europe on thoſe Accounts, in ſo deciſive, ſo ſhameleſs, and ſo unjuſtifiable a Manner.

NOTWITHSTANDING the magnificent Deſcription that Writer gives of the tranſcendant, incomparable Merit of the French Nation at that Time, an Engliſhman may call his Authority in queſtion, and Facts will furniſh him with Arguments, to prove that England was at that Period, the Land of Politeneſs and Arts, which were daily advancing to Perfection under the Guidance of a Johnſon, a Fletcher, a Shakeſpear, a Spencer, a Raleigh, a Knowles, a Bacon, and many others whom it were needleſs to mention, and who flouriſhed in the latter Times of Queen Elizabeth, the Reign of James the Firſt, and the Beginning of that of Charles, the Period preciſely, which this arrogant Frenchman marks as ſo honourable to France,

France, and ſo ignominious to its Neighbours. Certain it is, that the civil Troubles which broke out afterwards in England, were the ſole Impediment that ſtopt the Career of all our domeſtic Improvements; and it was but natural, that fierce and cruel as they were, they ſhould plunge us, during a Series of Years, into a total Oblivion of thoſe laudable Purſuits; and render us inſenſible to any other Objects than ſuch as made a Part of the ſanguinary Diſputes from which we found it ſo very difficult to emerge, and after the Extinction whereof; we were ſo long in reviving from the Calamities they had occaſioned.

But to obviate the Imputation of Partiality (of which this French Jeſuit is ſo deſervedly accuſed) let us appeal to the Authority of Foreigners, whoſe Verdict in ſuch a Caſe will doubtleſs be deemed unbiaſſed, and therefore intirely worthy of Credit.

If we conſult a Performance not unknown to this Century, and highly eſteemed in the laſt, the Geography of Cluverius, we ſhall find that, ſpeaking of our Countrymen

men during thoſe Times, he pays them t particular Compliment of paſſing for the moſt improved and acc›mpliſhed Nation then exiſtent. He does not affirm it from his own perſonal Eſtimation of the Fact, but as a Truth univerſally aſſented to: his Expreſſion is clear and deciſive, *nunc Angli omnium delicatiſſimi perhibentur*; the Engliſh now, ſays he, are accounted the moſt refined of all People.

We may draw ſtill nearer to our own Times, and cite the Opinion of Voltaire in his earlier Days; a Gentleman, who in more Inſtances than one, betrays no Inclination to allow us any more than our Due, and even hardly that. They who have read his Letters on the Engliſh Nation, may remember that he himſelf acknowledges we led the Way in poliſhing the Stage, incomparably the moſt liberal and polite of all Entertainments; from whence alone may be inferred that we were well acquainted with genteel Life, and its concomitant Elegancies before the French; who followed us at the Diſtance of many Years, in bringing their Theatre to any Degree of De-

cency

cency and Toleration. Rotrou firſt began, and like Æſchylus among the Greeks, ſhewed his Countrymen the Dawn of dramatic Taſte. But Rotrou did not appear till long after Shakeſpear was laid in his Grave; and none of that French Poet's Plays are now ever exhibited; while, on the contrary, almoſt every one of Shakeſpear's is repreſented to crouded Audiences; whoſe Admiration of them rather increaſes than diminiſhes, in Spite of French Criticiſms. So true it is that, as Cicero emphatically ſays, *Opinionum commenta delet Dies Veritatis Judicia confirmat.* Opinions laſt but a while, Truth lives for ever.

IT cannot be denied that the reciprocal Vein of Flattery, for which the French are ſo reprehenſible, is partly derived from the Nature of their Government. This will appear evident, if we reflect that it is, indeed, the common Misfortune of all abſolute Monarchies; wherein, as all Things depend on the ſole Command and Inclinatïons of one Perſon, they who are near him will of courſe conform to whatever ſeems beſt in his Eyes, in order to acquire his Favour, the only means they have to render themſelves con-

ſiderable. To theſe no leſs Court muſt, in their Turn, be paid by all who aim at Advancement. So that Flattery will gradually pervade all Ranks, and generous, manly Frankneſs of Speech, will retire to the Circle of a few, whoſe Characters will be noted for blunt, uncooth, old-faſhioned, and not qualified to mix with well bred People.

But when to the Force of political Conſiderations is added the Weight of thoſe Habits and Notions contracted through, and implanted by Education; the Influence whereof ſo evidently governs and, in a manner, forms and models the Temper and Diſpoſition of Men; it is but natural that, bred in a perpetual Strain of reciprocal Complaiſance, which forbids the Admiſſion of any diſagreeable Truth, the French ſhould imperceptibly loſe Sight of any other Maxim but that of pleaſing: and look on the Practice of that alone, as the Proof and Criterion of Gentility and Elegance in verbal Intercourſe.

Hence it is, that a Man who dares in France, to manifeſt his real Thoughts, and ſtem the Torrent of complimentary Falſ-

hood

hood that ſo ſhamefully deluges the moſt ordinary Tranſactions, will immediately be branded with the Appellation of *mal appris*, ill bred; and though, if his Station in Life be that of a Gentleman, and his Conduct otherwiſe irreproachable, he may not incur the former Term (which is rather harſh and injurious) yet he will infallibly be ſingled out for a *Miſanthrope*, an Epithet which, among the French, ſignifies a Hater of polite Behaviour, and a Sayer of diſagreeable Things; a troubleſome Gueſt improper to be admitted into civil Company, and fit only to enjoy the Impertinence of his thoughts in Solitude.

Such are the Ideas the French affix to the Word *Miſanthrope*, a Being ſo ſuperlatively diſguſtful to the Temper of that Nation, that Moliere, in the beſt Comedy he ever wrote (and as good a one as ever was written) brings him on the Stage with an Intent to expoſe and puniſh him. But mark the Force of Truth: That very Perſonage, whom the Poet laſhes and condemns as faulty, is the very one the Spectators moſt admire and venerate, inſomuch that it is a well known Anecdote, that the Duke of

Montau

Montauſier, the honeſteſt Man at Court, uſed to ſay, *Plut à Dieu que je reſſemblaſſe au Miſanthrope de Moliere!* Would to God I were like the Miſanthrope of Moliere; Circumſtances ſtrongly proving, that however diſagreeable a Perſon may become in French Companies by, adhering to Downrightneſs, and profeſſing a Contempt of Servility and Adulation, yet ſuch a Character, in the Nature of Things, remains not only laudable in itſelf, but even acceptable to all who are not within the Compaſs of its Exertion.

CHAP. XVIII.

A Peculiarity for which no People can poſſibly be more remarkable than the French, is their inſatiable Fondneſs of Anecdotes that relate to the private Tranſactions in Families; a kind of Knowledge in which they who are converſant in France are ſure of a moſt ready Welcome in all Companies.

ONE

One ſometimes hears of Perſons whoſe Subſiſtence ariſes, in a Manner, from their Expertneſs in unravelling that Clue of myſterious Behaviour which cloſe and covert People are ſo prone to affect; and one who is thoroughly verſed in this Art is allowed to *connoitre le Monde*, to know the World well. Now this Connoiſſeur of the World is generally a Perſon *deſœuvré*, as the French rightly call it, one whoſe Time is perfectly his own, and who may ſacrifice it to the moſt frivolous Purpoſes; ſuch as ſauntering from Place to Place all the Morning in Order to pick up a Fund of Information, and Scandal, ſufficient to defray the Charge of a Dinner ſomewhere.

This however is a Meal which Folks of ſuch a Stamp are never at a Loſs to find. Numbers of the faſhionable and the opulent make it a Rule to keep a Sort of open Table for a particular Set of Acquaintance; among whom ſome of theſe *deſœuvrés* have the good Luck to be conſtantly found, as it is indeed, one of the neceſſary Appendages of theſe public Tables, never to be wanting in

in this kind of Furniture; they being commonly the ambulating Chronicle of the Times, the Repertory where all that Science is depoſited, which conſiſts of the trifling Incidents and defamatory Paſſages of the Day.

THESE *triclinium* Orators (if one may ſo ſtile them) are very numerous in Paris, a City abounding more in Idlers than any Capital in Europe. This is owing to the innumerable Swarms of Eccleſiaſtics, and Officers, whom Indigence and Hopes of Preferments draw hither from every Province of the Realm; many, if not moſt of whom, continue long out of Employment, and being thereby driven to depend on the Bounty of others for a maintenance, muſt endeavonr to recommend themſelves by ſuch Qualifications as their reſpective Patrons teſtify a liking to; among which it not ſeldom happens, that ſome are required of no very honourable a Texture.

WITHOUT intending to depreciate our Engliſh Nobility and Gentry, whoſe Munificence

ficence and Generoſity on proper Occaſions are unqueſtionable, it may be affirmed there is a richer Fund of convivial Hoſpitality among the French; which, though it affords an ampler Field for Paraſites and Flatterers, yet (it muſt alſo be allowed) furniſhes, at the ſame Time, a neceſſary Encouragement and Relief to many, whoſe Situation in Life, though decent, is not attended with thoſe ſubſtantial Comforts that Affluence only can procure.

THUS the Tables of the French People of Faſhion, are in general much more reſorted to than thoſe of Perſons of their own Degree in any other Nation. It may, indeed, in many be deemed a Compliance with an eſtabliſhed Mode, in order to obtain the Reputation of being Men of prime Figure; but then it muſt be granted to be an Oſtentation of ſo uſeful and ſalutary a Nature, that if Pride may be tolerated on any Account, he is certainly the moſt excuſeable, who is proud of employing his Wealth in the hoſpitable Treatment of his Acquaintance: Among whom, though ſome,

per-

perhaps the Majority, may not be deſerving of ſo much Notice, neither from him nor any other, yet it were very ſtrange, if none ought to be excepted from ſo ſevere a Reflexion.

CENSORIOUS Travellers have, on the other hand, laboured to take away all kind of Merit from this Cuſtom, by repreſenting it as a Sort of national Rabies, like that of Newmarket in England. But they who argue in ſo heedleſs a Manner, forget that the former of theſe Follies may be, and is often beneficial; that when conducted with ſome Oeconomy, it ſeldom proves eſſentially detrimental: and that it is the leaſt unbecoming, of any of thoſe Foibles to which Men of Birth and Fortune are liable. While, on the contrary, it is unanimouſly agreed, as well by ourſelves as by all ſenſible Foreigners, that Newmarket is a Scene of moſt fatal and diſgraceful Tranſactions to many of the firſt Perſonages in the Nation; and beyond all Diſpute, the moſt pernicious Meeting permitted in this Country, for Reaſons which any Body can aſſign.

THIS Paſſion for convivial Hoſpitality, is likewiſe not a little owing to the mirthful Diſpoſition of the French Literati; a Claſs of Men who ſeem to delight in giving Birth to, and incourageing every Opportunity of exciting Merriment. Herein no Individuals in France are more expert and aſſiſting: and it is principally this good Humour in themſelves, and aptneſs to promote it in others, that ſecures them ſo agreeable a Reception every where.

THE *toujours gay* accompanies them, one may ſay, from *Parnaſſus* to the *Lyceum* and they handle no Subject whatever, with an air of Solemnity. As they are utter Strangers to that pedantic deportment, and Heavineſs of Converſation, which ſo frequently excludes Men of Letters in other Countries, from the Participation of Feſtivity, they are admitted with Readineſs into the moſt jovial Companies: where, to the Stock of Knowledge and Improvement which Education and Study beſtow, they have the happy Dexterity of adding that national Store of Chearfulneſs and Vivacity which enlivens all they ſay, and

gives a Turn of Sprightlineſs and Jocundity to the moſt weighty and ſerious Subjects.

It is, therefore, no matter of ſurprize if perſons of the higheſt Rank and Faſhion, ſo far from being averſe to the admiſſion of them at their Tables, ſhould, on the contrary, court their Company; and in their Cards of Invitation to the other Gueſts carefully ſpecify their Names, and *faire Fete*, as they expreſs it, previouſly exult in the Pleaſure they promiſe them, and themſelves, from the Enjoyment of ſuch Company.

This is no exaggerated Deſcription of the ſuperior Requeſt in genteel Society, which is the peculiar Felicity of Men of Learning and Genius in France: ſuperior certainly to the uſually unenviable Lot of ſuch Men in England; who, unleſs, as already obſerved, their Talents can be made ſubſervient to political Drudgery, are very ſeldom thought worthy of figuring among the Great.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

FRIENDSHIP is by no means an alien in France, and they who think the French deficient in this eſſential Requiſite to the Happineſs of Mankind, betray a very little Knowledge of and Acquaintance with their real Character and Diſpoſition.

IT may be queſtioned, without the leaſt Degree of Adulation to the French, whether there are not even more frequent Inſtances, and greater Exertions of that truly cardinal Virtue among them than among us: for which, beſide a Variety of Reaſons, this one may in particular be aſſigned, that Independence is a Thing much leſs known in that Country than in ours.

IN England, the great Object in the Views and Wiſhes of all is perſonal Independence in its fulleſt Latitude. This is ſo true that it is almoſt a conſtant Rule

for the very Dregs of the Engliſh Populace, in their Quarrels, to tell their Antagoniſts, with uncommon Emphaſis and Exultation, *you can't ſay I owe you any Thing:* a noble Pride that cannot be too much incouraged, as the ſhame annexed to the being dependent is the ſtrongeſt and moſt powerful of all Incitements to Induſtry, that main Source of the Happineſs and Well-being of a People.

So much, in ſhort, is the Fame and Reputation of Individuals rated among us, according to the meaſure of Independence they have the good Fortune to acquire, that it is the chief Boaſt and Glory of all who can attain it: and they who are not bleſt with this Advantage are ſtill deſirous to appear poſſeſt of ſome Share of it.

Hence it is the Generality of the Engliſh are very little prone to ſubmit to Dependence on any others, however eaſy the Terms may be; and when by the common Rule of Nature, which, in ſome Degree, renders all Men Subſervient

vient to each other, they are obliged to have Recourſe for Aid, it is with an ill Grace; and no Nation, it has been obſerved, underſtands leſs than we do the Arts of procuring Help and Protection: owing to that Spirit of Uncontroul which prompts thoſe whom it governs even to aſpire at a Freedom from every kind of Obligation whatever.

THIS Paſſion for Independence is, indeed, ſo conſpicuouſly rooted in the Natives of this Iſland, that it was not without ſome appearance of Reaſon Voltaire, in ſpeaking of the Reformation, ſeems to attribute the favourable Reception and Eſtabliſhment of it in England to thoſe Principles of abſolute Independence on the Dictates of others, whereon its Doctrines are founded; a Fondneſs for which he aſſerts, Nature has implanted in the very Temper of the Engliſh Nation.

THIS Notion is not uncommonly prevalent in Roman Catholic Countries: nor is it ſurpriſing that they whoſe religious Tenets will not ſuffer them to account for

for that great Event in a manner more honourable to the Diſſenters from the Church of Rome, ſhould aſſign ſuch other Cauſes for it as are ſpecious and plauſible: But Proteſtants have a Right to contend the Reformation is chiefly to be aſcribed to the Superior good Senſe and Diſcernment of that Part of Chriſtendom that embraced it. Theſe Motives were alone ſufficient to ſecure it a favourable Reception in England, excluſive of thoſe Peculiarities in our Character to which they impute it, and which they ſhould lay leſs Streſs upon, when it is conſidered that the Subjects of ſome other Governments, who were equally forward in promoting that ſalutary Work, neither were at that Time nor have been ſince remarkable for this Spirit of uncontroul ſo much inſiſted upon in the Engliſh Nation.

THE Truth is that Poverty is an Evil very much diffuſed in France; and as there is not ſuch a Profuſion, if one may ſo term it, of public national Charity there, as in England, the poorer ſort are greatly dependant on the rich; who, on the other Hand,

Hand, are very far from being wanting in Humanity and Acts of Benevolence to their indigent Neighbours.

But what is principally underſtood here by the word Friendſhip, is that Readineſs and Alacrity among Perſons in affluence, or even in no more than eaſy Circumſtances, to contribute to the Welfare of thoſe whoſe Means are inſufficient to put them forward in the World.

One third, perhaps, of the Youth educated in Colleges and Seminaries, owe their Maintenance and Support in theſe Places to the Kindneſs and Munificence of ſome generous Patron. This undoubtedly may be accounted a truly generous ſtrain of Friendſhip; as it not only tends to promote the Receiver of it to a State where he will be able to ſtand upon his own Ground, and depend ſolely on his Diligence and Capacity, but to raiſe himſelf thereby, in no long courſe of Time, to the ſame Level of Conſideration with his Benefactor: as it often happens that many who have begun the World in

this Manner, have met with the moſt rapid Advancement, and in the Zenith of Life have become Men of very great Importance.

It were more advantageous, however, for the Nation in general, if this Exerciſe of private Generoſity, which is very extenſive, was more properly directed: for it cannot be denied that from Motives of ill underſtood Piety, many of theſe worthy Friends to Society are led to think they cannot fix a Man in a Situation more acceptable to the Deity, and conſequently more beneficial to himſelf, than that wherein he is dedicated to the more immediate Service of Heaven, by conſecrating his Labours to the Cauſe of Religion.

This is one of the Reaſons why France is ſo ſuperfluouſly peopled with ſecular and regular Clergymen; many of whom, indeed, embrace that Form of Life from a total Inability to purſue any other Courſe: as when a Man has attained to Years of Maturity, and the moſt precious

Portion

Portion of his Time, that which ought to have been employed in qualifying him for a Vocation more ſuitable to his Temper and Inclination, is irretrievably elapſed, no Remedy can eradicate that worſt of all Evils an Averſion to manual Labour, or what is eſteemed illiberal Employment, founded on the long and fatal Habit of buoying up the Mind with immoderate Hopes and Expectations of becoming conſiderable in what we have been early taught to look upon as a more creditable Condition.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XX.

TO what has already been ſaid concerning the Character of the French Clergy, it may be juſtly added, that there is not a more learned Body in the whole World; and that in every Province of Literature and Science, it has produced Men of the primeſt Merit and Abilities.

To them it is chiefly owing that Learning flouriſhes ſo diffuſively in France; and the Reign of Lewis the Fourteenth, acquired no inconſiderable a Share of its Luſtre, from the many diſtinguiſhed Perſonages that abounded among them.

WHEN we caſt our Eyes on that Celebrated Age, we muſt candidly acknowledge it to have been amazingly fertile in Men of the moſt profound, as well as the moſt uſeful Capacity. It was a happy Aera for the Improvement of the human Underſtanding, and of all thoſe Arts that

that embelliſh Nature and render Life delightful. As notwithſtanding the many Wars in which the Ambition of that Prince ingaged him, domeſtic tranquility was ſettled on a ſtrong and laſting Foundation, the Natives had full Leiſure and Opportunity to emerge intirely from the Ignorance and Barbarity of former Times, ariſing as much from inteſtine Feuds, as Deficiency of encouragement to Men of Genius. The firſt of theſe, indeed, generally producing the laſt, and Seaſons of internal Quiet only being favourable to intellectual Proſecutions.

This Epocha was equally remarkable in England as in France: the emulation of both Nations keeping Time, as it were, and ſtimulating them to uſe their utmoſt Efforts not to be ſurpaſſed in this reciprocal Strife for Superiority of Renown.

These illuſtrious Rivals were juſt then recovering from a State almoſt of Anarchy. They had for Years experienced all the Horrours of civil Confuſion, and had felt the moſt dire Effects of factious

Animoſity

Animoſity and Rage, when through the Suppreſſion of Parties in France, and the Wearineſs, rather than the Extinction of them in England, Peace happily revifited both Nations at Home; and revived a Spirit which had lain dormant, and now recovering double ſtrength, from a long duration of Reſt, rouſed and exerted itſelf, like a Man who has been thoroughly refreſhed, and reſumes his Buſineſs with a freſh ſupply of Vigour.

The whole Range of Knowledge and Literature was ſubjected to the moſt indefatigable Inveſtigation; and Names that will be handed down to the lateſt Times, adorned their Annals in the brighteſt Profuſion.

The commencement of this ſplendid Period may be dated from the Peace of the Pyrenees, and may be ſaid to have terminated about the twentieth Year of the preſent Century; when the South Sea Projects in England, and the Miſſiſſipi Schemes in France, with other Monſters of Infatuation, produced ſuch a chaos in the

the Minds of Men as Poſterity will hardly believe; as, for a conſiderable Space of Time, unhinged all the common Ideas of Reaſon, and involved not only theſe, but ſundry other Nations in the wildeſt and moſt abſurd Purſuits that ever diſgraced the human Underſtanding.

THE afore-mentioned Period was not only fruitful in the Production of the ſublimeſt Votaries of Learning and Works of Genius, but was equally repleniſhed with Stateſmen and Heroes. Some of the nobleſt and moſt beneficial undertakings were framed and carried on, and many of the moſt ſignal Military Feats atchieved, that ever graced the Councils or Arms of either Nation.

BUT the Felicity of England preponderated in the Scale of Compariſon with that of France. For a while, it is true, the latter ſeemed to ſhine with ſuperior Luſtre: but the radical Defect of a bad Conſtitution ſoon overturned that admirable ſtructure of National Grandeur, which the Abilities of the moſt conſummate Politician

litician France ever gave Birth to had ſo ſucceſsfully planned and erected. The great Colbert, even before he left the Stage, had the Mortification to perceive he had laboured in vain; and his comprehenſive Mind foreſaw, that in a Government like that of France, and under ſuch a King as his Maſter, the Mighty Things he had compaſſed would ſhortly be undone.

FAR different was the Fate of England. While France lay at the Mercy of the worſt Adminiſtrations, eager and triumphant, as it were, in the Deſtruction of their Predeceſſors Trophies, and turning the whole Kingdom into one ſtupendous Scene of Tyranny and Perſecution, the Spirit of Equity and Moderation was dictating, in England, thoſe wiſe and ſalutary Meaſures, in civil and religious Matters, that laid the Foundation of our ſubſequent Proſperity. At Home, the Revolution, to ſay no more, and its fortunate Conſequence, the Act of Settlement, calmed and pacified the Apprehenſions of a People long threatened with a Subverſion of their Liberties, and a Reduction to that State of Servitude,

Servitude, which their miſled Sovereigns were incited by the Flattery of proſtitute Courtiers, to look upon as the proper Condition for Subjects.

Add to this the generous Toleration and Freedom of Opinion and Conſcience granted with not more Juſtice than ſound Policy: and which in the Lapſe of a few Years, by gradually leſſening the aſperity with which an outragious Warmth for particular modes of Worſhip, induced Zealots to treat ſuch as diſſented from them, connected the Generality of Men in that fundamental Principle of all Social Happineſs, a reciprocal forbearance of Enmity and Diſlike on account of a Diſparity in Spiritual Tenets.

These domeſtic Bleſſings, highly valuable in themſelves, were inhanced by the Proſpect of the Calamities ſo many of our Neighbours were groaning under, through a Reverſe of Conduct in their Rulers. It ſeemed as if moſt of the European Princes of thoſe Days, had determined to try how far they might extend their

their arbitrary claims over their People; and theſe, on the other Hand, did not appear unwilling to countenance, by their Paſſiveneſs on all Emergencies, the moſt extravagant Pretenſions of Sovereignty.

In the very dawn of the Period we are deſcribing, Denmark had ſet a Precedent unheard of in any civiliſed Nation, by a formal, voluntary Surrender of its Liberty into the Hands of its Monarch. This ſlaviſh Spirit became in a manner contagious: it communicated itſelf to Sweden, where Charles the Eleventh, a Prince equally daring and ambitious, loſt no Opportunity of imitating his Daniſh Neighbour, and found Means to arrive at a degree of Power, unknown in that Kingdom, ſince the expulſion of its Tyrant Chriſtiern by the great Guſtavus Vaſa.

In the South of Europe, not only France, as already obſerved, had loſt all Traces of its former Liberty, but even Portugal, a Country juſt freed from the Spaniſh Yoke, through the united Bravery and Conduct of all Claſſes, had not

Spirit

Spirit enough to compleat its Deliverance, by eſtabliſhing the Conſtitution on an equitable Baſis, and limiting the Influence and Prerogatives of a Prince, who was the King of their Choice, and held his Diadem, as it were, from their Courteſy.

In the more diſtant and leſs noticed Regions of Chriſtendom, the like ſyſtems prevailed, and were even productive of greater Evils, as they who were the Sufferers did not tamely bow the Neck to Subjection, but ſhewed by the Length and Intrepidity of their Reſiſtance, they were worthy of a better Fate. This teſtimony is amply due to that brave, but unfortunate People, the Hungarians; a People exceeded by none in the Zeal and Courage wherewith they ſtruggled againſt Oppreſſion, tho' none were ever more cruelly dealt with by their Oppreſſors.

When we reflect therefore on the Situation of Europe in thoſe Days, it will be acknowledged we had ſufficient Reaſon to congratulate ourſelves on the exemption from ſo many dreadful Evils, and

to be peculiarly ſtrenuous and active in preventing their Introduction into this Iſland.

It may not however, be thought too national and preſumptuous, to inſinuate that we were not altogether undeſerving of this Felicity. Not to inſiſt on the generous Reception of the perſecuted Proteſtants, fled hither in ſuch Multitudes from France, the Part we acted on the political Stage of Europe, in eſpouſing the Cauſe of its ill-treated and injured Princes and States, againſt the unjuſt Enterprizes and Deſigns of that Crown, was ſuch as redounded to our greateſt Honour, by the Impartiality and Unſelfiſhneſs of the Motives that inſpired our Councils with that laudable Determination.

This Aſſertion is amply confirmed by that nobly diſintereſted Conduct to which all the World bore Witneſs, during the Continuance of that triumphant War at the opening of this Century, wherein the valour of our Troops, the ſkill of our Commanders, and the Ability, and what

is

is much more the Integrity of our Miniſters, excited the Wonder, and ſecured the Confidence and Reſpect, not only of our Allies, but even of our Enemies. And tho' in the Concluſion of thoſe Hoſtilities that had ſo long deſolated the Face of Europe, through the moſt untimely Diviſions among ourſelves we loſt the Opportunity of humbling for ever the only Foe this Nation has to fear, yet it muſt not be forgot, that, in the midſt of their Miſconduct, our Negociators did not loſe Sight of that Magnanimity which had been the ruling principle of all our National Proceedings: and notwithſtanding many Conceſſions were made that juſtly render their Memory odious, they yet preſerved that firmneſs in thoſe Demands wherein the Intereſts of Humanity were concerned, as evinced that even in our Deviations from Judiciouſneſs we retain a manly feeling Heart.

THIS Encomium is juſtly due to the generous Care and Notice taken of the diſtreſt Proteſtants in France, at the Treaty of Utrecht; wherein Proviſion was made

for the Releaſe and Security from Impriſonment and Perſecution of ſuch as were ſuffering merely for their Religion: happily for whom (ſo powerfully was the Dread of our Enmity impreſt on the Mind of their King) he conſented to what in a more proſperous Situation of his Affairs, his Haughtineſs and Bigotry would have equally concurred in rejecting with the utmoſt Diſdain.

THIS Tranſaction, ſo truly honourable to the Character of the Engliſh Nation, Voltaire, in his Age of Lewis the Fourteenth, is ſo forcibly ſtruck with, that he could not forbear the moſt particular Mention of it; and in ſuch terms as do Credit to the Juſtneſs of his Sentiments on this Occaſion, as they prove his regard for the Welfare of Mankind. "*C'etoit* (ſays he) *dicter des Loix, Mais des Loix bien reſpectables* This was preſcribing Laws, but they were Laws deſerving of the higheſt Reſpect.

HAPPY! had they who were at the Head of this Nation, in that important Criſis

Criſis, acted with the ſame Inflexibleneſs in all other Inſtances. Our Succeſſes in War intitled us to all reaſonable Conceſſions from a vanquiſhed Enemy: the Safety of Europe, the peculiar Intereſt of England required the compleateſt Humiliation of France; and the Facility wherewith they might have obtained the higheſt Advantages for every Part of the Confederacy, rendered their Neglect to avail themſelves of ſo favourable an Opportunity to ſerve the Common Cauſe unpardonably Criminal; the more, indeed, as had the Foe been in the ſame Circumſtances of Superiority, it is more than probable he would have improved them to the utmoſt, from the Readineſs and Dexterity he manifeſted in extricating himſelf from the moſt mortifying and almoſt inſuparable Difficulties, in Spite of his exhauſted Condition.

NOTWITHSTANDING the Inſufficiency of the Advantages procured by the Terms of Peace, the Height of Military Reputation we had acquired by Sea and Land, and the Fame of our national Probity

were ample Motives to inforce the Reverence of all our Neighbours. We continued accordingly the Umpires of Europe for a long Series of Years; and the uprightneſs of our political Meaſures was ſuch as indeared our Government to all the unprejudiced, unambitious Part of the World, and made the Generality of the European States very unwilling to ſee any Interruption of our Tranquility.

But what principally merits our Attention, and is the moſt profitable of the many uſeful Leſſons to be learned from the variety of remarkable Events this Period ſo plentifully affords, is the ſtriking Diſparity of Fortune attending the Engliſh and French Nations, which has already been touched upon. For a conſiderable Space of Time we went Hand in Hand with the French; and Voltaire is right enough in aſſerting that a Rival Spirit was firſt excited in the Engliſh by the flouriſhing Figure France was making under the Adminiſtration of Colbert, that excellent Patron of all kind of Merit; to whoſe auſpicious Influence and Indefatigable Vigilance

are

are owing all its great eſtabliſhments of Trade, Commerce, and Manufactures; all founded in his Miniſtry, and chiefly if not ſolely, through his perſonal Attention and Aſſiduity. But the ſuperſtitious Infatuation of its Monarch altered the Scene; and we ſoon got a-head of our Rivals by his Expulſion of the Proteſtants; which Meaſure alone we may fairly aſſign as the principal Cauſe of all the enſuing Miſeries that in a manner deluged his whole Realm, and ſo fatally diſgraced the Remainder of a Reign that had been accompanied with ſo much Splendor.

HENCE it happened, that in the ſame Proportion as the Strength of France decreaſed, that of England became doubly augmented, by advancing gradually in its own Improvements, and benefitting in the ſame Degree, by the Decay and Loſs of thoſe its Rival ſuſtained, as they almoſt all took Shelter under our Protection, in the Perſons of thoſe countleſs Multitudes that brought over with them ſuch an Acceſſion of Ingenuity to the large Fund already poſſeſſed in this Nation.

CHAP. XXI.

AMONG the many ameliorations due to the ſuperior Taſte and diſcernment of that famous Æra, we ought not to omit the Progreſs made in that moſt capital and uſeful Branch of Knowledge, the inlarged and comprehenſive view of the public Intereſts of Mankind, which began about this Time to make a neceſſary Part of the Literary Qualifications of a Gentleman. They, indeed, who had ſo long neglected to make their ſtudies ſubſervient to this great End paid Knowledge a poor Compliment, and little knew wherein its moſt eſſential utility conſiſted.

THE Name of a ſcholar, therefore, began henceforward to mean ſomething more than a meer Dealer in Books and Languages. Antiquity was no longer ranſacked for the ſole ſake of uſeleſs Curioſity, but was now produced on the Scene of Action, as we recall from his Retreat

Retreat an ancient Venerable Counſellor, in order to aid by ſuch Directions as are the collected wiſdom of Years, thoſe whoſe more youthful Date renders them of courſe leſs acquainted with Experience.

Such was the beneficial Spirit of Inquiry and Reſearch that took Place of the laborious and fruitleſs Drudgery which had, for near two Centuries, dulled the Capacity of the Literati, and employed them in an Exerciſe of their Faculties as needleſs and tedious to themſelves as unprofitable to others.

In the mean Time experimental Philoſophy, which Bacon had laid the Foundation of in England, and Galilei introduced into Italy, was carried to a Perfection former Ages had no Glimpſe of the Poſſibility of, by the noble Inſtitutions of the royal Society here, and the Academy of Sciences in France; many of the Members of both which Bodies were Men of prime Magnitude in their reſpective Departments. Moral and intellectual Philoſophy (if one may uſe the

Expreſſion

Expreſſion) were alſo cultivated with no leſs brilliant ſucceſs; and the polite Arts never in any Nation boaſted more numerous and more ſkilful Profeſſors.

In thoſe enlightened Days the Univerſity of Paris aſſumed a new Face; was almoſt intirely new moulded, as it were; and from being the ſeat of Pedantry, and of ſcholaſtic Impertinence and Abſurdity, became a Seminary of real Erudition.

The French Nobility, too, from being rude and nearly Gothic in their manner of Living, took another Turn and became the admirers and Protectors of the Muſes: a Faſhion which, inſtead of diminiſhing, has rather increaſed ſince that Time. A French Gentleman would now be aſhamed of appearing in that illiterate Light wherein his prejudiced Anceſtors would have gloried, about the beginning of the Seventeenth Century; when, through the ſanguinary Quarrels that had ſo long and ſo terribly agitated France, the ſpirit of Learning (which

ſince the Reign of Francis the firſt, had diffuſed itſelf among the Great) was nearly extinct, and a Military Roughneſs and Ferocity had taken Poſſeſſion of their Minds: a Fact remarkably illuſtrated in the curious Converſation reported by St. Evremont, between two elderly Perſons of Quality in his Time (the one a zealous advocate, the other a profeſt Hater of Literature) wherein the latter aſſerts, by way of boaſt, that in his youthful Days (the Period above mentioned) no Gentlemen ſtudied but ſuch as were deſigned for the Church. The Education of the others conſiſted in Dancing, Riding, Fencing, and other martial Exerciſes; and concludes with this remarkable Expreſſion, *du Latin! de mon Tems, du Latin! un Gentilhomme en eut ete deshonore.* Latin! in my Time, Latin! a Gentleman would have thought it a Diſgrace.

NEITHER were we leſs forward in ſhaking off the Ruſt and Gloomineſs contracted during the Reign of Fanaticiſm. Notwithſtanding it behoves every honeſt

honeſt Engliſhman never to mention, without Deteſtation, the Name of Charles the Second, yet, with all his Enormities (and ſome he was guilty of that were, without Exaggeration, of the blackeſt Dye) he had received from Nature ſuch a plentiful Portion of Wit and Vivacity as contributed not a little to rouze his ſubjects from that lethargic Indolence and Inattention to Elegance and Taſte which the horrid ſcenes they had long acted in had almoſt obliterated from their Ideas. And tho Luxury had its Birth in his Days, ſtill this ſhould be attributed to the Propenſity of mankind to exceed the proper Medium in all Things, much more than to the Manners of his Court, which were by no means unmanly and effeminate; witneſs the great Number of Noblemen and Gentlemen that were ſo ready to expoſe themſelves to the Dangers and Hardſhips of War both by ſea and by Land.

The Truth was that having ſufferred ſo much in a long Courſe of the bloodieſt Diſſentions, the whole Nation was, in

in a manner, hurried into a Fit of boundleſs Joy at ſeeing them concluded; and like a Man who, after having long been deprived of the means of procuring the Comforts and Pleaſures of Life, is apt on the Return of Proſperity to overſhoot the mark of Moderation, they hardly knew how to ſet Limits to thoſe Exceſſes in Paſtimes and Diſſipations which from that Epocha of their Commencement have grown to ſo ſtupendous and dangerous a Height among us, that no Nation in Europe, not even the French (as prone to Diverſions and Amuſements as ourſelves) can pretend to vie with the Engliſh in the Elegance and Variety of them; if ſuch a ſtrife is worthy that ſerious attention which ſome weak minded People have thought proper to beſtow on it, even ſo far as to imagine that our Superiority in ſuch a Conteſt was a Proof of national Grandor and Felicity; while it is no more, at beſt, than an argument of our Opulence, and no leſs a one, at the ſame Time, of our Extravagance in the uſe of it.

THE ſtate of Learning in France, is not inferior, at preſent, to what it was in the Reign of Lewis the fourteenth. Doubtleſs the Merit of leading the Way (a very great one) belongs to it in the fulleſt Latitude: but that of perfecting ſeems the peculiar Characteriſtic of the preſent. Eloquence and Poetry were then indeed, on a more ſplendid Footing that they have been ſince, tho both Crebillon and Voltaire are univerſally reputed not inferior in their kind to the firſt Rate Authors of that Time. But then experimental Philoſophy and political knowledge have been cultivated with the higheſt applauſe; the latter eſpecially is now arrived at that Luſtre which no paſt Ages ever ſaw; and Monteſquieu is a Name of which the French may boaſt with the beſt founded Pride, if indeed ſuch a man, is not rather to be deemed, what Voltaire ſo nobly ſays of Newton, the Property of all Nations.

CHAP. XXII.

THE French are of opinion they much excell us in the ſecondary Branches of Poetry, ſuch as Songs, Paſtorals, and other Compoſitions of that ſort. In Epigrams it muſt be allowed we have no Right to compare with them. Rouſſeau's particularly are truly admirable, ſo far as Productions of that Stamp can claim ſuch an Epithet. But if we are at the Pains of looking over the divers Collections of the other light Poems in our Language, we ſhall ſee no Cauſe to ſubſcribe to any aſſertion of our Inferiority in that Reſpect.

THIS Notion, which the French are very ſanguine in maintaining, ariſes from the Prepoſſeſſion they cheriſh in Favour of that Superior Quickneſs in their Perception and Apprehenſion of Things, which repreſents an object in all the variety of lights it is ſuſceptible of. This uncommon

mon readineſs they poſſeſs more of, in their opinion, that any other People. But there is no occaſion to make them ſo undiſputed a Conceſſion of this Claim as they imagine themſelves intitled to.

TRUE it is they are perpetual, and we may add not ſucceſſleſs Hunters after what they call *Eſprit*: but this may be better tranſlated by Vivacity of Expreſſion than Wit. For if we attend to the real character of many Perſons among them who paſs for *Gens d'Eſprit*, we ſhall find they are rather noted for ſprightlineſs in their manner, than for what we underſtand by Men of Wit: which rather implies an Elucidation of Thought, by apt References and ingenious Compariſons, than a Brilliancy of ſpeech derived from the choice of words alone. This livelineſs, as it is often borrowed from the warmth of Expreſſion only, is as often wanting in Truth, which ought in ſtrictneſs, to be the Body of which wit is the Soul, agreeably to the Precept of their own beſt Critic, *Rien n'eſt Beau que le vrai. Boileau.*

It ſhould not, however, be denied that this Vivacity in diſcourſing, which characteriſes moſt of the French People of Education, is generally very pleaſing: the more ſo as it is not the Reſult of Affectation, but uſually the native Produce of the ſoil.

This Qualification they are peculiarly careful to diſplay, in order to make themſelves agreeable to ſtrangers, to us eſpecially, of whom the French prefer the Applauſe and Approbation to that of any other People.

To do them Juſtice, indeed, in what regards their Behaviour to our Countrymen, there are no ſtrangers they ſtudy ſo much to be agreeable to. The Gayety of their Diſpoſition is doubly exerted in their Intercourſe with us; as they are uncommonly delighted when they have been able *de rejouir un Anglois*, to make an Engliſhman merry; for they deem it a real Curioſity to ſee us laugh and ſport; and when any of our Countrymen happens to be gifted with

a Turn of Temper ſimilar to their own, they gaze at him as a *rara Avis*, one whom a ſingular Felicity has exempted from the Depth of Thoughtfulneſs and Reverie annexed to our character.

EXPERIENCE, however, proves that as chearful merry Beings are to be found among the Engliſh, as among the French, or any Nation; and theſe in no ſmall Number: This may be eaſily verified by thoſe who will be at the trouble of converſing among thoſe Claſſes in England where much ſcheming and plodding are not requiſite, and where an impartial, attentive Examiner will confeſs there is as much, if not, often, more Archneſs and verbal Feſtivity than among Individuals of the ſame Condition in any Country whatever.

THERE appears, indeed, a more conſtant and uniform Vein of Joviality in the Temper of the French, inclining them to unbend their Minds with more facility than We do: but, at the ſame Time, we do not obſerve that a Company of

Engliſh-

Engliſhmen met with a view of Amuſement are deficient in attaining that End.

WHAT often deceives us into an ill grounded Perſuaſion that the French enjoy themſelves more than We do, is the Difference in expreſſing Mirth and Gladneſs peculiar to each Nation, as well as to each Individual. We that are, in general, more grave and ſerious, find more Pleaſure in the reciprocal Communication of our Thoughts. They, who are more airy in their Diſpoſition and lighter in their Notions, are much more taken with that Effuſion of Levity which denotes a Mind free from the Burden of much Reflexion, as is moſtly the Caſe of the merrieſt ſort of People.

THESE petulant Indications and Exceſſes of Merriment ſo much more uſual in France than in England, tho' they are an argument that the French, in common, do not employ their Faculty of Thinking ſo much as the Engliſh,

prove not, however, that they are internally more happy.

THE Pleaſure and Felicity of the Mind moſt certainly ariſe not from an Abſence of the graver Ideas; as is unanſwerably evinced by the conſideration that the moſt ſolid, as well as moſt rational Entertainments (thoſe which ſink deepeſt in the Soul and dwell moſt ſatisfactorily in our Remembrance) are preciſely thoſe wherein good Senſe and Judgment are moſt appealed to. How ſuperior, for Example, to any other Paſtimes are thoſe of the Stage; and thoſe which conſiſt in the Peruſal of ſuch Works as the Spectators, and ſimilar Books of equal Entertainment and Inſtruction?

SHOULD it, after all, be affirmed that the French give more frequent Indications of Joy than We do, this may readily be admitted. But whoever accurately obſerves the Conſtitution of human Nature, will not from thence conclude that they poſſeſs a greater ſhare of real Happineſs

Happineſs, any more than a Man is to be reputed the richer for making an oſtentatious Parade of his Money. As the latter may have no great ſtock of what he is fond of diſplaying, ſo the former may be, for various Reaſons, deſirous of appearing what they are not.

HOWEVER, to compromiſe Matters, let us allow the French to be more willing to communicate their Pleaſure, and to partake of that which may be received by way of Exchange; and the Engliſh, on the other Hand, to be ſatisfied with the Enjoyment of their own and leſs curious of experiencing that of others.

CHAP. XXIII.

ONE of the principal Objects of a Frenchman's Attention, in the Progreſs of his Intercourſe with any Individual, is the Tenour of his exterior De-

 portment,

portment, and the Frame of his Perſon. Both are examined with the niceſt accuracy; and Ideas, advantagious or unfavourable, are formed according to the Impreſſion theſe eſſential Circumſtances have made. Hence the immenſe Care taken in France of whatever relates to the outſide of a Man.

GRACEFULNESS of Behaviour and perſonal Comelineſs are moſt certainly Things of far greater value and Importance among the French than among the Engliſh. The latter eſpecially, is an advantage of the firſt Rate. Whether it is that not being ſo much indebted to Nature in that Particular as We are, the leſs it is common there the more it is deſired; or whether they imagine it is of more Conſequence to promote advancements in Life, than Qualities leſs ſtriking and obvious is perhaps not eaſily determined. But whatever the cauſe may be, *un bel Homme*, a handſome Man is an Expreſſion pronounced with much more apparent ſatisfaction among them by ſuch as have ſome Right to the Appellation

lation, and with an air denoting a much greater Conſciouſneſs of its Influence than is perceivable here; where, tho' far from depreciated, it is allowed no more than its real Worth, and viewed, as it ſhould be, in the Light of a fortunate Caſualty which neither adds to, nor detracts from the Merit of the Poſſeſſor.

THEY, on the other Hand, who feel their Deficiency in this capital Requiſite betray no ſmall Regret in their Tone and Accent when the Subject is brought on the Carpet; which it is much more frequently among the French than among the Engliſh, who are, in general, but little inclined to pay much Hommage to the exterior Gifts of Nature.

AND yet nothing is truer than that no inconſiderable ſhare of Notice is taken of, and Reſpect ſhewn to, the Engliſh, in France, on this very account; it often proving the chief Motive of their Introduction to very agreeable Acquaintance.

WHILE the French are ſo ſedulouſly intent on rendering their Exterior acceptable, it is no Wonder they ſhould ſo ſeverely cenſure the Engliſh for the Neglect, not to ſay Contempt many of them, in a manner, profeſs for thoſe Attainments the drift of which is to improve our bodily Perfections, or to ſupply our Deficiencies in theſe reſpects by the Rules and Aſſiſtance of Art.

THERE are few among ſuch of the former as can afford it, not only compleat in the Knowledge of perſonal Demeanor, but who, at the ſame Time, are not perfectly qualified to make a Figure on thoſe Occaſions where a Man is not looked upon as a Member of the polite and gay World, unleſs he is able to bear a Part in the faſhionable Modes of Feſtivity. Thus there is hardly any body among them of a genteel Condition who is not able to acquit himſelf with Dexterity in many various kind of Dances; whereas an Engliſhman thinks he has done enough, if he can walk a Minuet, or make a Partner in a Country Dance. The French Nobleſſe

Nobleſſe are moſt of them very expert in this Exerciſe; and a *grand Danceur* is a Title which Perſons of the higheſt Rank are but too frequently not a little proud of acquiring.

THE Notion, or rather the Conviction of the Utility, one may even ſay the Nobleneſs of this Exerciſe, is carried ſo far among the French, that one Marcel, a famous Dancing Maſter, has compoſed a Treatiſe on its Power and Efficacy in refining the Mind, and infuſing Sentiments of Elegance and Delicacy: and uſed often to ſay there was no truer method of diſcovering the Elevation or Meanneſs of Temper and Diſpoſition in a Man, than by examining him attentively in the different Attitudes of Dancing.

THIS latter opinion may not altogether be groundleſs and whimſical. There is a Paper in the Spectator of ſomewhat a ſimilar Tendency, and written purpoſely to recommend the Practice of Dancing. No doubt the various motions of the Body muſt excite more or leſs the correſpondent

Emotions

Emotions of the Mind, which Dancing was originally invented to expreſs. But ſo many are endowed with the nobleſt mental Qualities who remain remarkably indifferent Adepts in the Art of manifeſting them by the divers Poſtures of the Body, that it were wholly ridiculous to ſuppoſe it can contribute to exalt a Faculty with which it ſo often ſeems almoſt incompatible.

THE French dancing Maſters imagine themſelves, however, Perſonages of much higher Conſequence than ours are apt to do: owing to that accompliſhment being ſo much more in Requeſt and Repute among the French than among us; who think rather unfavourably of ſuch as are peculiarly fond of it: not but there are Numbers of our Country-men (eſpecially of thoſe whoſe viſits to France are often reiterated) who are ſo far frenchified as to beſtow as many Encomiums on a great Degree of ſkill in this frivolous attainment, as if they had been bred under the Tuition and Management of Marcel himſelf; and had been taught to believe

that

that it raiſes the Dignity and Worth of the Soul, as much as it graces the Deportment of the Body.

CHAP. XXIV.

FROM Dancing the Tranſition is natural to Fencing. Well may one ſay that this noble Science of Defence, as its admirers ſtile it, has proved one of the moſt offenſive Inventions to human Society. War only excepted, there is not, indiſputably, in the whole Circle of the many Cauſes concurring in the deſtruction of Mankind, any which has effected that Purpoſe ſo diffuſively as this has done, in the production of its fatal Offspring the Spirit of duelling; whoſe dreadful Tyranny prevailed over Europe a full Century, in all its Horrors; and kindled ſuch a blood-thirſty, revengeful Diſpoſition in the Hearts of Men, as during a long ſpace of Time

Time, ſet Reaſon and Religion at Defiance, and rendered Life precarious in the moſt melancholy and alarming Degree.

NOTWITHSTANDING the Rage and Violence of this Peſt of human Nature is pretty much abated, comparatively to its former Influence, it ſtill too widely ſubſiſts; and like an epidemical Diſtemper which all the Power of Medicine cannot wholly eradicate, its eruptions are ſtill manifold in moſt, or rather all Parts of Europe.

IN France, whither this Demon flew from Italy, about the beginning of the Sixteenth Century, it long infeſted the Natives in ſo terrible a manner that the Ties of Friendſhip and Kindred became the moſt dangerous of all Connexions; and from being a Principle of Safety and Protection (as by Reaſon and Nature deſigned) they proved the greateſt of all Misfortunes: as a Man, the more extenſive his Alliances were of either kind, was, in conſequence, expoſed to the more frequent Demands of perſonal Interference

in

in every Quarrel; and however peaceable in his own Temper, was in continual Riſk of ſuffering through the Altercations occaſioned by the outragious Impetuoſity of Conduct in others.

THESE murderous Quarrels, however ſhocking and barbarous, grew, at laſt, to be the Vogue among all young Gentlemen who pretended to Spirit and Mettle, and it was, one need not ſay almoſt, but abſolutely ignominious to have preſerved one ſelf free from Feuds, and never to have fought a Duel.

THE ſlighteſt Cauſes were ſufficient to breed a Diſpute. A Look, a Geſture, a Word ill-underſtood, a meer Contradiction, or even a difference of Opinion, taking the Wall of another, omitting the Civility of the Hat, in ſhort Things that good Senſe ſhould treat as Matters beneath all Attention, much leſs Reſentment, all theſe were judged cognizable Caſes; and Satisfaction for thoſe reputed Injuries was eſteemed ſo neceſſary to preſerve the Credit of the Perſon who was deemed affronted, that no Man whoſe Situation in Life

Life was genteel, could avoid complying with this ſanguinary Faſhion, unleſs he meant to ſeclude himſelf from Society for the Remainder of his Days, in order to ſcreen himſelf from the Scoffs and Indignities he muſt lay to his Account to meet with from all Quarters.

THIS Infatuation gained, at length, ſo pernicious a Head, that ſingle Combats, while they retained the Appellation, were, in Fact, the very reverſe; and it became cuſtomary for no Man to engage another ſingly. The whole Poſſe of Friends and Intimates entered the Liſts on either Side; and nothing was more frequent than the Slaughter of a Dozen or Fifteen Men, from the moſt idle Altercations between two Individuals.

THIS infernal Mode ſpread like a contagious Peſtilence over the Face of Chriſtendom. Proteſtants and Roman-Catholics, however they differed in religious Matters, agreed in the Notion of the Neceſſity that Blood ſhould waſh away the Stains caſt upon a Man's Honour.

WERE

WERE People of Birth, in the preſent Age, to examine their Family Records, it is much to be queſtioned whether one could be found of any Note and Figure in thoſe unhappy Times, that has not paid a Tribute of ſome of its Blood to this inhuman Cuſtom; whoſe univerſal Prevalence was ſuch that States, tho' at Peace with their Neighbours, and unembroiled with political Conteſts, at Home, might ſtill, with the ſtricteſt and moſt woeful Truth, be ſaid to be torn to pieces by civil Diſcords, when we reflect how many uſeful and worthy Members of the Community were daily butchering one another on the moſt miſerable Pretexts.

SUCH were the accurſed Conſequences flowing from the Introduction among Mankind, of a Practice utterly unknown to the moſt illuſtrious Nations that ever ſhone in Hiſtory; and which was, at the ſame Time, ſo far from being a Proof of perſonal Intrepidity, that it took it's Riſe in that Part of Europe whoſe In-

habitants

habitants were more deficient in Courage than thoſe of any other European Country.

THE firſt notable Exertion of this deſtructive Art happened at Naples, the Place of its Nativity, between twelve Italians, and as many Frenchmen of the Army of Charles the eighth of France, who had juſt reduced that Kingdom to his obedience by the Right of Conqueſt. The French of thoſe Days, whoſe Bravery was unqueſtionable, could not produce twelve Warriors out of their whole Army, able to cope with the Neapolitan Champions, who gained a compleat victory over their French Antagoniſts, each Man ſoon laying his Adverſary on the Ground.

SMALL Swords were at that Time little known; and the French *Gendarmerie*, all Men of tried Courage, and whoſe Proweſs in Battle was well known every where, and had been particularly felt by the Italians, made uſe of large heavy ſwords, ſuch as are ſometimes ſhewn in in the Repoſitories of old Abbies and Churches abroad, and are often ſeen affixed

affixed to the Walls or Pillars near the Tombs of ancient Warriors. Theſe were uſually of a Size that required the Strength of both Hands to manage; and had been originally fabricated by the Swiſs, at all Times a warlike People, but at this Period ſo celebrated for their Valour and bodily Stoutneſs that as thoſe who had the greateſt Number of them in their ſervice thought themſelves the ſurer of Succeſs, ſo, by a Parity of Reaſoning, they whoſe Armies had the largeſt Proportion of Men robuſt enough to wield the like Weapons, entertained the ſame Confidence of courſe.

THIS Triumph of Italian Skill over French Courage, rouſed the Indignation of theſe latter, and determined them to loſe no Time in rendering themſelves equally expert; which it muſt be acknowledged they very ſoon accompliſhed: for we find, a few years after, a French General offering to reſt the Fate of his Maſter's Armies and Poſſeſſions in that very Kingdom, on the Deciſion of his private Skill in ſingle Combat with the Commander of Ferdinand of Spain's Forces, his Maſter's

more fortunate Opponent. But this Chieftain happened to prove no leſs a Man than Gonſales of Cordova, juſtly ſurnamed the great Captain, and we may not impertinently add the Turenne of his Day, who anſwered the Challenge much in the ſame Manner Turenne did that of a German Prince by totally defeating the Challenger's Army

In this manner was one of the greateſt Evils known in theſe latter Ages, the ſpirit of Duelling, brought from Naples, by the French; who paid dear for the tranſitory Laurels they gathered in that Region, and long had ample Cauſe to lament their almoſt momentary Poſſeſſion of it.

Henry the fourth, the greateſt Monarch that ever ſat on the Throne of France, tho at one Time he ſeemed rather to countenance the Prejudice of the Times, did endeavour, but very ineffectually, to ſtop the Progreſs of this Evil, which was then in the Zenith of its Fury. But, poſſibly as he was a Man of amazing

Intrepidity

Intrepidity, and had been uſed, for a ſeries of years, daily to incounter Death in its every ſhape, he did not perceive the Horror of ſuch Deeds ſo clearly and feelingly as if he had been uſed to a more pacific Life; or (which was no leſs obſtructive to his ſalutary Intentions, perhaps the martial Temper of the Times, which were but juſt emerging from civil Rage and Barbarity, and replete with Prejudices of all Kinds, was too much tinctured with the natural Ferocity ariſing from perpetual Wars and Ignorance, to ſubmit with Patience and Docility to an Injunction ſo new to their Ideas and Apprehenſions.

WHATEVER the Cauſes might be, it was reſerved for Lewis the fourteenth not totally to ſubdue, but to repreſs, in a great Meaſure, this Spirit of Implacability; which, untill his Reign, ſubſiſted in its fulleſt Exceſs, and had gained Ground even in our Iſland: where fortunately however, it never roſe to that deplorable Height which deſolated our leſs inlightened Neighbours: for the much leſs Ad-

miſſion and Countenance given to this outlandiſh Mode, ought unqueſtionably to be attributed to our ſuperior Progreſs in Civilization and polite Improvements.

CHAP. XXV.

NOtwithſtanding the Practice of Duelling has been ſo much, and ſo bitterly inveighed againſt, there is no Neceſſity to declare abſolutely againſt the Science of Self-defence. Were, indeed, ſuch a Part of Education wholly aboliſhed, the World would certainly be Gainer by the leſs Number of Lives loſt in the fatal Diſplay of Expertneſs and Courage, which the Poſſeſſors of both are too often ſeeking Occaſions to ſhew; but as the Faſhion is ſo profoundly rooted, that no Hopes remain of its ever ending, it is now to be conſidered in the ſame Light as the Art of War; and may, like that, be deemed a neceſſary Evil; the ſame Arguments that ſupport the Legality and Fitneſs of ſtudying, with the utmoſt Application, the pernicious Art of deſtroying whole Nations, being ſurely no leſs concluſive

cluſive in authorizing us to learn how to murder Individuals in our own Defence.

The French Youth are quite intoxicated with the Merit of excelling in this Knowledge; It is really aſtoniſhing how many beardleſs Youths, yet in their Teens, have drawn their Swords in perſonal Diſputes. But the worſt of the Miſchief is that a ſingle Fray is not always ſufficient to terminate Enmity. The rigid Laws of Honour require, in certain Caſes, that, as often as the Foe is met, even by unexpected Accidents, the Attack be repeated. By theſe means Quarrels ſeldom fail to prove fatal in the End, to one of the Parties at leaſt, if not to both; to ſay nothing of the Infirmities that too frequently imbitter the Lives of thoſe who, tho' they ſurvive their Wounds, drag on a miſerable Being in conſequence of them; and have ample Reaſon to lament the Misfortune of having been, in a Manner, obliged to conform to this inhuman Prejudice, and approve, as it were, by their Practice, what in their cool, reflecting Hours, their Reaſon muſt neceſſarily condemn.

THIS, however, is a Strain of Thinking far from being prevalent in France, where the Remorſe of Conſcience one would naturally ſuppoſe concomitant on Homicide, does not, in all Appearance, much infeſt the Remembrance of ſuch Deeds. On the contrary, the French, inſtead of expreſſing Sorrow and Uneaſineſs on theſe unhappy Occaſions, rather ſeem to think of them as we would of an Engagement in War, where the Slain may be ſpoken of as unfortunate, but the Slayers eſteem themſelves fully abſolved from the Neceſſity of feeling any Repentance or Compunction.

SUCH is preciſely the Light theſe Enormities are viewed in. It is a common Thing to hear Gentlemen recounting the Number, and giving a Detail of their Duels, juſt in the Manner an Engliſh Tar would relate the Battles he has been in at Sea.

IT were to be wiſhed that, on Retroſpection of what has been advanced on this Subject, Impartiality required any thing to be expunged; but this is ſo far from being the Caſe, that one may even add (and to the Shame

Shame of the French be it recorded) that many of them almoſt eſteem and reſpect a Man who is noted for a Duel-monger (the Caſe deſerves no better Term) neither is it improbable, that were they to avow what paſſes in their Minds, while he is on the Chapter of his Exploits, we might perhaps find him an Object much leſs of Commiſeration or Abhorrence than of Envy.

BUT what is ſtill more ſurpriſing, and may be aſſerted without incurring the leaſt Imputation of Malice or Wantonneſs, the Character of a Duelliſt is far from being unacceptable to Numbers of the French Ladies; who, though in general poſſeſſed of all that exterior Softneſs and Suavity of Manners which the utmoſt Art and Labour can confer on the fair Sex, are not, however, comparable for Tenderneſs of Heart to the Engliſh Women, who always ſhudder at the Recital of theſe honourable Murders; while too many of the French liſten to ſuch Tales with as much Indifference and *Sang froid* Calmneſs, as the moſt intrepid General receives the Notice of a Battalion's giving Way in Action.

THOUGH ſome may qualify this want of Senſibility with the Title of Strength of Mind, yet the Vanity of ſuch a Pretence is clear, when we reflect that, even in Men, an Abſence of Sympathy, when ſuch Paſſages are told in their Hearing, argues Inhumanity and Hardneſs of Heart.

WHENCE they derive this ſcandalous Unfeelingneſs is very perceptible when we caſt our Eyes on the Syſtem of Life adopted by ſuch as are guilty of it. This ſhameful Diſpoſition evidently flows from the vicious Turn of Thinking, contracted by a long Habit of hearing the military Men, with whom the Women have much more Society in France than in England (and a large Proportion of whom are proteſt Adherents to Duelliſm) continually declaiming on the Valour and Merit of thoſe Individuals who have performed the moſt numerous Feats in this dreadful Field of Honour. This is ſo true, that ſometimes Ladies of Gallantry, who are numerous in France, are proud of a Man's Attendance and Aſſiduities, when his Name is up for a *ſorte epée*; as one who is not to be intimidated

dated from his Attachment to them by the Terror of a more formidable Rival; and whom they are leſs liable to loſe through that Propenſity to ſupplant a Lady's Favouite, at all Hazards, which is one of the moſt active Peculiarities in the Character of a Frenchman.

FROM theſe Premiſes it is natural to conclude that the *Salles d'Armes*, the fencing Schools at Paris, are dangerous Reſorts for Youth. An elderly, grave Gentleman, whoſe Experience of them had convinced him of this Truth, uſed often to declare that he had rather his Son ſhould make the hotteſt Campaign, than frequent theſe Schools during the ſame Space of Time; as the Chances of War were the moſt eligible.

WHAT chiefly renders theſe Places ſo unſafe is that, in each of them, there is uſually ſome equally arrogant and reſolute Coxcomb, who aſſumes the Province of Dictator, and whom to contradict is to challenge; and as People of this Stamp commonly act in this inſolent manner, from a Conſciouſneſs of their ſuperior Skill, the Caution

Caution uſed to avoid Altercations with them, renders them only much readier, and fearleſs in giving Affronts.

A young Man muſt, therefore, be poſſeſſed of an uncommon Share of Temper and Prudence who can ſteer ſafely through the Perils that ſurround him in ſuch an Element of Diſcord; where, beſides the above-mentioned Fiend, he will have to face thoſe many *Tapaguers* (Bravoes) who, ſtrange and unaccountable as ſuch a Diſpoſition muſt ſeem, infeſt theſe Places in queſt of Broils.

The French are often apt to expreſs their Surprize, that ſo brave a Nation as the Engliſh, ſhould pay ſo little Regard to what they deem ſo eſſential a Part of a genteel Education; and that We ſhould be ſo averſe to admit of their Maxims in theſe Matters, and ſo willing to terminate amicably ſuch Differences as with them would occaſion the warmeſt Reſentment.

Some Frenchmen, indeed, unwilling, as it were, to loſe the Countenance and Sanction of

of ſo illuſtrious a Nation as ours in this too faſhionable Mode, among them, of diſplaying perſonal Valour, would fain inſinuate that the Engliſh have alſo figured in this Province, and inſtance the famous Duel between the Lords Sackville and Bruce, ſo particularly deſcribed in the Guardian.

It may not be amiſs to remark that the Aſſertion contained in the Motto of the Paper alluded to in that Performance, is glaringly erroneous; and how ſo judicious a Writer could coincide with it is ſomewhat aſtoniſhing; as daily Proofs evince, beyond the Power of Contradiction, that ſuch a Love of Fame as impells Individuals to refer the Deciſion of their Diſputes to the Sword, far from being a

——————— glorious Heat,
Only deſtructive to the brave and great,

involves in the ſame Deſtruction the moſt worthleſs and contemptible of Men.

We may conclude this Review of ſo baneful a Deluſion with the Words of Lucan

Lucan, (not leſs applicable to that horrid Inſanity of Mind, which, in modern Ages, has rendered the moſt unrelenting Proſecution of Revenge in private Quarrels meritorious, than to that ferocious Implacability between contending Factions, which formerly filled the Roman Empire with reciprocal Maſſacres and Aſſaſſinations) *Quis Furor, o Cives, quæ tanta Dementia Ferri?* Whence can proceed this Fury, this outrageous Thirſt for mutual Deſtruction? Which, in Defiance of all Laws, in ſpite of the Suggeſtions of Reaſon and the Admonitions of Conſcience, in Contempt of thoſe Ties and Obligations which the Motives of Friendſhip and Beneficence ought to render ſacred and inviolable, can ſlight the moſt ſerious Warning, can ſilence all Reflexion, can ſtifle every Feeling; in a Word, can break through all that is deareſt to human Nature, in order to obey a Prejudice founded on the moſt abſurd Principles that ever were, in an evil Hour, fabricated for the Miſchief of Mankind, by Men of narrow Hearts and depraved Imaginations: a Prejudice productive of no Gratification, ſave

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that whereof the Enjoyment is often purchaſed with the Diſquiet of Life ever after, and the Iniquity of which the moſt ſenſeleſs Aſſertors of the Neceſſity of conforming to it, and even the moſt profligate and flagitious Members of the Community, unanimouſly concur in acknowledging.

CHAP. XXVI.

AFTER having ſo freely cenſured the French for the falſe, unwarrantable Notions of Honour, ſo generally entertained among them, and their guilty Compliance with the Modes of aſſerting it, we may now enter on a more agreeable Taſk, and take a View of them in the more humane Light of ſocial Beings, and Partakers of the Pleaſures of a free and eaſy Intercourſe among themſelves; in the Management and Proſecution whereof, they are avowedly fit to

to give Laws to all Mankind, and to be cited as the happieſt Models of Imitation.

As their Minds are leſs ingroſſed with Ambition, and as the Acquiſition of immenſe Riches is not ſo much the Object of their Cares and Labours as it is that of the Engliſh, they are conſequently more at Leiſure to attend to the Enjoyment of the moderate, one may ſay, indeed, very moderate Pittance that uſually falls to their Lot; to make the moſt of which is their conſtant Study: while We, on the Contrary, are imbarking in every Scheme, in order to increaſe our Stock, and never imagine that a Man is blameable for toiling to that Purpoſe, during the whole Courſe of his Life.

SUCH is, without Exaggeration, the Character of the Generality of People in England, who, tho' on the one Hand, very far removed from that of Niggards (a Vice quite foreign to our Soil) are yet highly deſerving of Condemnation for the perpetual Reſtleſneſs of their Endeavours to obtain

tain enormous Wealth. In this reſpect, we highly reſemble the Carthaginians, whoſe Deſire of Money was inſatiable, and over whom the Romans had no other Superiority than that which proceeded from a more moderate *Auri ſacra Fames*, thirſt of Lucre.

In the ſame Manner, the ſuperior Facility the French have a Right to boaſt, in Compariſon of the Engliſh, in the procuring of Mirth and Feſtivity, may be deduced, in a great Meaſure, from their being leſs burdened with a Weight of Attention to pecuniary Concerns.

It ſhould not, however, be thence inferred that their regard for Money is inferior to that profeſt here. The true State of the Caſe is that they are not leſs tenacious of what they poſſeſs than We are: but then, either they feel a leſs power-Inclination to acquire more, or, perhaps, are not indued with that Reſolution and Perſeverance which are neceſſary to carry a Man through thoſe Difficulties which accompany the Purſuit of Riches.

THE great Foundation of all commercial Proſperity is a patient, cool, and almoſt phlegmatic Aſſiduity. This the French in general, moſt certainly have not; and Experience teaches us that Ingenuity (of which they inconteſtibly have no ſmall Portion) is not a ſynonymous Word with Induſtry; by which are meant Diligence and Application; Qualities thoſe People commonly are furniſhed with, in a more extenſive Degree, who have but leaſt of the former. As a Proof of this, we may ſingle out the Dutch, whoſe Laborioufneſs is not more conſpicous and proverbial, than their Unaptneſs and want of Vivacity in ſuch Arts as require a Quickneſs of Thought, and a Readineſs of Invention.

THE French, indeed, are from another very material Cauſe, leſs ſtimulated to dedicate themſelves to Toil for the ſake of Affluence; and therefore have turned the Edge of their Appetite and Fancy to other Objects. As Wealth alone, however immenſe, is not, by the Nature of their Government, allowed much Importance and Conſideration, the Call for Riches cannot

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of courſe be ſo great there as in a Country where they are the moſt eſſential Baſis of perſonal Influence. Thus the chief End a Frenchman can reaſonably wiſh to attain them for, is in order to enjoy the Sweets of Society, and purchaſe the various Comforts and Delights of Life. We Engliſhmen have more inlarged Proſpects; and beſides the Pleaſures and Luxuries we propoſe to come at, as well as the French, have that far weighter Object in our Eye, the *Digito monſtrari* the Paſſion of becoming Perſons of Conſequence in the political World; a Situation not attainable in a free Country, without a large Meaſure of Opulence as well as of intrinſic Merit.

Philoſophy teaches us that the more we dilate the Sphere of our wiſhes, the greater becomes the Difficulty of arriving at Content. It ought, therefore, to be readily acknowledged that we have no reaſon to expect an equal Participation of that Serenity and Calmneſs we ſo commonly meet with in the French; whoſe aims and Purſuits are ſo much more cir-

cumſcribed. But, on the other Hand, is it not a Queſtion whether there may not enter as much of Happineſs in that Activity of Mind which prompts us to be always on the wing of Eagerneſs and Deſire, as in that Tranquillity which ſets all our Faculties at Reſt? Are not, for Example, thoſe innumerable Agitations that fill the mind of a Lover, while ſuſpended between Hope and Fear, as agreeable to Fancy, as the conſtant, uninterrupted Courſe of domeſtic Satisfaction and Felicity which he claims the Right of enjoying under the more ſecure Title of Huſband?

We ſhall not deviate from Truth in aſſerting that Men are often egregious Dupes of Apathy by miſtaking it for Contentment. There are as many, perhaps more Bars of Separation between this and an idolent, liſtleſs Diſpoſition than between Contentment and a reſtleſs one, ever in Motion, and ever ſetting forward in the Execution of its numberleſs Schemes. We are too apt to beſtow the

Title

Title of interior Peace on what is no more, in Fact, than Averſion to Activity. Hence it is that ſo many Individuals are pronounced happy and ſatisfied with their Condition, who are inwardly fretting at it, tho unwilling to beſtir themſelves in order to bring about an Alteration. While, on the other Hand, we accuſe of Ambition, and claſs among the uneaſy and diſcontented, thoſe of whom the ruling Paſſion is an Abhorrence of Reſt, and whoſe active Temper is ever ſpurring them forward to various Enterpriſes, much leſs from a ſpirit of Covetouſneſs, and a Deſire of acquiring, than from a native and deep-rooted Love and Habit of Action and Employment, in the Gratification of which their Felicity conſiſts.

If We examine the latter Characters we ſhall find them far preferable in every eſſential Qualification to the former; which are uſually contracted in their Notions, and ſordid in their Conduct; great Pretenders to Parſimony, but in Reality timorous Guardians of their Poſſeſſions

and no ways inclined to Liberality: While the others, from being generally ingaged in Attempts benificial to the Community, acquire a Soul of Munificence, and feel a laudable Pride in contributing to the Service of the Public, theſe, on the contrary, from being ſolely centered in the private, narrow Circle of their own Concerns, dare not, as it were, ſtep out of themſelves, and are too ready to look on the Exertion of a generous Diſpoſition as the meer Sallies of Prodigality and want of Forecaſt.

We ſhould not, therefore, be too ſanguine in over-rating the Merit of all thoſe who ſit down quietly to enjoy a moderate Lot without Care and Diſturbance: for tho long Habit may, at laſt, inure many of them to the Pleaſures of domeſtic Tranquillity, yet we have often good Ground to preſume the original Cauſe to have been either want of Abiſity, or Inclination to take any Pains to improve their Circumſtances.

THERE is often ſo much Vanity at the Bottom of thoſe vaſt Pretences to Moderation and Philoſophy that ſuch Numbers would willingly cloak their Indolence with, that we cannot be too vigilant in detecting and expoſing it, leſt a manly and uſeful Propenſity to Scenes of Buſineſs and Action ſhould be deemed leſs meritorious than it really is, and ought to be accounted: and leſt it ſhould, through falſe Suggeſtions and Pretences, become like a deſerted Province, which they whoſe Duty it was to preſerve it have abandoned and loſt for want of Courage to defend it.

BY ſaying ſo much in Praiſe of a buſy Life, it is not meant to be inſinuated that the French are of an inactive Turn. They certainly are quite the Contrary. But then their Activity is of another Sort, and too often converſant in Matters of ſmall or no Importance. Whereas the Motives that prompt us are commonly of Weight; and indeed, unleſs impelled by ſuch we are not eaſily rouzed: much leſs, at leaſt, than

the French, whoſe natural Levity needs no great Excitation: they are generally in a Buſtle about whatever they do, and ſeem to be much more in a Hurry to have done than We are.

Coolness is evidently much more our Talent than theirs: and hence, perhaps, we may, ſometimes, appear to unthinking Spectators deficient in Quickneſs, while, in Reality, we are only free from Precipitation, its capital Enemy, and the more dangerous as, by aſſuming its Form, it acts the Part of a falſe Friend, and under the Notion of conducting us the neareſt way to the Completion of our Deſigns, leads us into numberleſs Errors.

Precipitation is, unqueſtionably, more impedimental than Slowneſs of Apprehenſion. This, though it may retard our Operations, yet ought rather to be conſidered as Chains, the Burden and Incumbrance of which is, indeed, a Clog to Speed, but not an abſolute Hindrance to Motion: while the former is like a Stumbling-

bling-Block that overthrows our Schemes at the very firſt ſetting out on their Execution.

THIS, undeniably, is the national Failing of the French, though it muſt be confeſt it is attended, on many Occaſions, with ſo agreeable a Share of that Vivacity which confers a Value on all it accompanies as atones, in a very great Meaſure, for the many Miſtakes and Inadvertencies it cannot fail to produce, when carried to the Exceſs from which the French are the leſs able to abſtain, as they profeſs ſo high a Value for that Volatility of Imagination which is its principal Source; and wherein they delight to indulge without Reſtraint.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WHETHER it proceed from a happy Careleſſneſs of Thought, contracted from the Conſciouſneſs of their wanting Perſeverance to ingage in difficult pecuniary Purſuits; or whether it ariſes from the Inutility they foreſee large Acquiſitions may prove of to the Views of Ambition, or often, probably, from both theſe Conſiderations blended, the French do not, in general, apply with ſo much Fervour and Diligence to the Attainment of Riches as the Engliſh, and conſequently meet with fewer Interruptions in the Courſe of their Paſtimes and Enjoyments.

THESE, however, are much more uniform and ſubject to Rotation than ours; the Reaſon of which is that being, from various Cauſes, on a more friendly, familiar Footing among themſelves, than People are in England, they have, accordingly, leſs Occaſion to go abroad in Queſt

Queſt of Recreation; which We are, on the other Hand, neceſſitated to do, from that Want of reciprocally domeſtic Intercourſe they ſo juſtly reproach us with.

THE Engliſh ſeem to court Pleaſure like a Miſtreſs who muſt be well paid for her Favours: Whereas the French treat her like an old Acquaintance that is to be uſed without Ceremony. Hence, We ſeek for Diverſion in our public Reſorts of Entertainment, moſt of which are no ſmall Drain to the Purſe: while they have diſcovered the Art of diverting themſelves without Expence, by thoſe amicable Family Aſſociations ſo much diffuſed throughout all France; and that contribute perhaps more than any other Cauſe, to keep alive that vein of Mirth they are ſo noted for, by affording it continual Employment.

THE principal Seaſoner of all theſe private Societies, ſo numerous and ſo deſervedly admired, is an *Enjouement* an eaſy Flow of Sprightlineſs that ſuffers not the gloomy ſide of Things to be ſeen; that hand-

handles all ſubjects without too much Inquiſitiveneſs; and avoiding a needleſs Profundity of Speculation, exerts itſelf in extracting from them that only which has a Reference to, and is promoting of Feſtivity: that borrows, in ſhort, from the whole Circle of Ideas, thoſe which Nature has deſigned for the Creation and Purpoſes of Pleaſure; and as ſtudiouſly diſplays them in all their Shapes and Colours.

ANOTHER no leſs agreeable than neceſſary Concomitant is a ſtrain of good Breeding, unmixed with any Stiffneſs or Ceremony; and which is of eſſential ſervice to heighten the Reliſh we feel for Pleaſure, by keeping it within Bounds, and not permitting it to degenerate into Tumultuousneſs and Indecency.

HENCE a Truth and Delicacy of Taſte are formed no Nation ſurpaſſes, and few can rival the French in; whoſe Knowledge and Expertneſs how to compaſs and enjoy the intellectual Elegancies of Life is arrived at the higheſt Eminence.

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The Claim of Priority in theſe polite Attainments muſt, indeed, be allowed to the Engliſh, who, as already obſerved, inconteſtably led the way in the Field of Refinement. But without depreciating the latter, it may be ſaid that, in many Reſpects, the French have much inlarged the original Plan; by calling in to the aſſiſtance of Wit and Senſe, that Facetiouſneſs and Jocundity of Ideas, and that Eaſe and Freedom of Manners, neither of which had yet been brought to that Degree of Perfection requiſite to render Society completely delectable.

By intellectual Elegance is meant that Urbanity of Thought and Expreſſion which adorns every Topic of Converſation, from the Turn given to, and Method of treating it; and that Introduction of Gracefulneſs and Addreſs which confers an additional Weight on what is ſpoken.

In the firſt of theſe Endowments the Engliſh had already the greateſt Merit: but the ſecond ſeemed reſerved for the

the French to bring to its moſt brilliant Maturity: and Impartiality requires it ſhould be acknowledged that they ſupremely excell in the highly eſtimable Art of making mutual Intercourſe a Fund of Entertainment and Delight.

ONE need not ſcruple to aſſert that this Conſideration alone amply counterballances the many Frivolities peculiar to the Character of a Frenchman; and induces us to forget, with the utmoſt Willingneſs, the trifling Incidents owing to Levity or Inadvertence, in order to pay our Tribute of Thanks and Gratefulneſs for the many agreeable Hours we reap from that Spirit of good Humour and Sociability which influences their Manners in ſo captivating a degree.

WERE the Engliſh more inclined to cultivate this valuable Art than ſome have thought compatible with their Temper, and others with their Government, they appear no leſs calculated to ſhine therein than any People whatever; as they are deficient neither in the Gifts of Nature

Nature, nor of Fortune neceſſary to this End. Their good Senſe and mental Qualifications are inferior to thoſe of no Nation; and what is equally inſtrumental and co-operating in ſuch a Purport, they live in the freeſt of all political Conſtitutions, where Sentiments are fearleſs and unreſtrained: and their Situation and Circumſtances intitle them to all the manifold advantages reſulting from Opulence, that moſt effectual Encouragement and Support of all ageeable and indearing Accompliſhments.

We do not, however, ſeem to judge favourably enough of theſe ingaging Talents for Society; and rather ſpeak of them as tranſitory Methods of ſpending Time, than as Means of rendering Life a Scene of perpetual Feſtivity; which, in reality, they never fail to prove, by that Diffuſion of Hilarity over all our Thoughts which produces an equal Aptitude to be pleaſed with others, and to become acceptable to them.

This, without Partiality, is an exact and

and unembelliſhed Account of the general Temper and Diſpoſition of the French; who, tho far from ſuperior, if even equal to the Engliſh, in the Virtues of a more exalted Nature, have ſtill the Preference in the Opinion of unbyaſſed Judges in the ſecondary Qualifications; and rarely, therefore, are diſappointed in their Endeavours to be acceptable in all Societies, by the Vigilance and Attention they exert in ſezing every favourable Opportunity to diſplay that Treaſure of chearful Complaiſance in their Behaviour, and unaffected Gayety in their Deportment, to which they have been bred with ſo much Carefulneſs that they acquit themſelves, on all occaſions, with ſuch an Air of Facility, as if Nature had implanted theſe Qualifications in them at their very Birth.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

OF all the European Nations none is fonder of convivial Merriment than the French: and ſuch among them as are in any-wiſe able to afford it, are very ready to make Entertainments for their Friends and Acquaintance; wherein, at the ſame Time, they uſually pride themſelves in being the Reverſe of ſparing in whatever the moſt ſtudious Exceſs of Luxury can deviſe.

SOME critical Foreigners, Engliſh eſpecially, are often apt to hint that as Cookery is with the French an Art of infinite Variety, they have, in conſequence of the numberleſs Experiments daily made in it, diſcovered a Secret not yet much known among other Nations, that of making

making a little paſs for much; the Utility whereof is evident to all Connoiſſeurs in theſe Matters, from the Readineſs and Dexterity wherewith Inventions of this Nature are adopted and improved: A Circumſtance alluded to by one of our Country-men whoſe Appetite was, it ſeems, rather of too hearty a Frame to prefer Nicety to Abundance; and who uſed to obſerve that *Parvum in Multo* a great Shew and little Reality was a Saying not unapplicable to many of their Tables.

These Strictures might poſſibly be true in the Caſe of ſome Pretenders to Opulence, unwilling to rank beneath the *Donneurs de bons Repas*, Feaſt Makers; a Title which, to the Praiſe of the French, (as it proves a Turn to Hoſpitality) many of them are remarkably deſirous of bearing. But ſtill it were unjuſt to diſallow the general Spirit of Liberality and Plentifulneſs prevailing among ſuch whoſe Circumſtances inable them to indulge in this national Propenſity to make a Parade of good Cheer.

It is well known there are Numbers of their People of Faſhion who would be uneaſy at the Thoughts of ſitting down to Table alone. Hence, as their Example is of diffuſive Influence in a Country where an Imitation of the Great is more prevalent than any where, open Tables, as already obſerved, are common among ſuch as are in a Situation to keep them.

In the mean Time the Genius of Mirth preſides on all theſe Occaſions in its fulleſt Glory. All the *bons Propos* diverting Topics, a jovial Mind can ſuggeſt; all the facetious Stories that Archneſs can recollect or fabricate; in ſhort, the whole ſcope of whatever belongs to Wit and Pleaſure is looked upon as eſſential in ſuch Aſſemblies, which ſeldom, if ever, admit of any political Diſſertations to interfere, and carefully keep at a Diſtance every Object that wears the leaſt Aſpect of Serioufneſs.

It were a groundleſs Severity to aſſert that nothing of this Sort is ſeen among us.

We ſee enough of it. But the Misfortune is that it rarely fails gradually to fall away; and from the Raptures of good Fellowſhip, we often find ourſelves at the Concluſion of a merry-Meeting, involved in ſome Party Altercation that not unfrequently terminates in a very fatal Cataſtrophe.

THIS, happily, is never the Caſe among the French, who always provide a ſufficient Fund of exhilarating Subjects to keep up the Warmth of Joy; and never deviate into what they call thoſe unſeaſonable Diſquiſitions that caſt a Cloud on moſt of our Engliſh Banquets.

IT ought, however, to be confeſt that in a Country like England, political Diſcuſſions in convivial Aſſemblies, are often far from being improper and unſeaſonable. It is through the unreſtrained Reciprocation of Thought on ſuch Occaſions, that Men feel the Pulſe of each other, and that the Sentiments of the Senſible and the Patriotic, which otherwiſe might never tranſpire, are collected and

and propagated. We owe to this Cauſe, more than to any other, the Preſervation and Confirmation of our free Conſtitution, which might be much more eaſily undermined if this Medium were wanting, and People abſtained more than they do from venting their Opinions of Men and Meaſures in Company.

We are not, therefore to give the French more Credit on this Head than they are entitled to; ſince their Silence on Subjects of this Nature, is not merely the effect of Urbanity and ſuperior Politeneſs, but ariſes, in a great Degree, from a Conſciouſneſs of the Danger they would expoſe themſelves to by ingaging in ſuch Converſations.

What further contributes no leſs agreeably than effectually to prevent them is the Preſence of the fair Sex, without whom the French very reaſonably imagine no Party of Pleaſure can deſerve ſuch a Name; and are, conſequently, very ſollicitous to compoſe their Aſſociations of

an equal Mixture of both Sexes; which is conſidered in France, as it ought to be every where, indeed, as the propereſt Method of preſerving a true Spirit of Civility and Chearfulneſs in all Companies.

No Nation that wiſhes to be renowned for Politeneſs and Breeding ſhould countenance any other Method: but there unfortunately ſtill ſubſiſts in England too great a Propenſity to exclude the Company of their fair Country-Women from their convivial Paſtimes; not reflecting that ſuch an Excluſion, of courſe, induces them to be leſs on their Guard againſt Indecorums.

The French often wonder whence can proceed ſo unnatural a Willingneſs to relinquiſh the Society of Woman-Kind, in Men ſo completely qualified to excite their Eſteem and merit their good Graces as ſo many Engliſh Gentlemen are, whoſe Modeſty of Behaviour and Propriety of Conduct cannot fail to ſet them in a moſt advantagious Light in the Eyes of every judicious and conſiderate Female.

THE Force of Education alone can account for the Prevalence of a Practice that tends ſo powerfully to leſſen the value of all Social Enjoyments, and to nouriſh thoſe Seeds of Faction and Diſcord that ſome very obſerving and accurate Foreigners think more deeply ſown in our Minds than in thoſe of any other People.

SOME political Zealots, on the other Hand, have Thought that the leſs we converſe with Woman-Kind, the more we ſhall retain of that Vigour and Fortitude of Soul neceſſary to ſupport Independency and Freedom; and that a greater Communication would only promote Effeminacy and relax the native Manlineſs of our Diſpoſition.

BUT Experience is not on the ſide of this Opinion. Slavery is far more generally eſtabliſhed in thoſe Countries where the Sexes are debarred a full Liberty of mutual Intercourſe, than in thoſe where they have the moſt unobſtructed acceſs to each other. Witneſs the Aſiatic Parts of

the World; where Women are little better than impriſoned all their Lives; and where the Men are, at the ſame Time, the moſt tame and deſpicable Victims of the moſt unbounded and moſt heinous Tyranny.

THE Introduction of Deſpotiſm into France, was not, certainly, owing to the Regard the French profeſs for female Society. Long before they were reduced to political Servitude, they were univerſally renowned for an Attachment to the Company of the fair Sex.

IT is only, therefore, by too conſtant an Aſſociation with Woman-Kind, and by carrying this Attachment to an improper Extreme, that the Minds of Men can be enervated, and any Detriment accrue to public Freedom.

THERE is, however, no Danger of Engliſh Liberty being loſt through any Exceſs of Devotion in our Men to the Company of the Women. The Affairs of the Nation claim ſo conſiderable a

ſhare

ſhare in our Thoughts, at all Times and Places, that they will ever lead us to ſeek principally the Society of ſuch as can make a Party with us on that favourite Chapter.

MEAN while, in the midſt of that total Diſſolution of Care, and thoſe boundleſs Sallies of Joy attending their Feaſts, a Circumſtance highly to the Credit of the French is their very remarkable Sobriety. Bacchus is not permitted to tyranniſe over them; and only governs like the King of a limited Monarchy: very different in this Reſpect, from ſome of their Northern Neighbours, and from what we were ourſelves not many Years ago; when the Rules of Moderation in Drinking were abſolutely unknown, and its Abſence opened a Door to all manner of Indecency: A Circumſtance that ſufficiently accounts, at the ſame Time, for the Excluſion of the fair Sex upon ſuch Occaſions.

HAPPILY the Times have undergone a very neceſſary Reformation in this Parti-

ticular and only want a little further Addition of Female Aſſiſtance to compleat the perfection of our commenſal Paſtimes, which are by no Means deficient in the other Requiſites of Jovialneſs and Elegance; which latter is a Word with us too much reſtricted as yet to the Meaning of good Cheer, and the luxurious Plenty of all that Nature can ſupply us with, and the modiſh Refinements of the moſt curious and expenſive Art recommend to our Palate.

It may be queſtioned whether the lower Sort of People in France, are not more addicted to Feaſting, on their Days of Relaxation from Buſineſs, which are many, than our Commonalty on their Days which are few. Poſſibly, the more conſtant Uniformity of good Living among the inferior Sort in England diminiſhes their Avidity to fare better at one Time than another. Whereas in France, it is ſomewhat according to the Proverb, all a Feaſt, or all a Faſt. Thus from a penurious Courſe of Feeding on their Working-Days, they are glad to emerge to

ſomething

ſomething more comfortable on their Holy-days: and while our People are, perhaps, ſolacing themſelves over a Diſh of Tea, or a Draught of Ale, when the Afternoon Walk is over, one may ſee the Environs of Paris crouded with Folks regaling themſelves with all the Dainties that Money can procure.

WHATEVER, indeed, ſome Foreigners may pretend, the Engliſh are not, on the whole, deſerving the Epithet of a luxurious Nation. Plain, ſimple, ſubſtantial Nouriſhment is yet in the greateſt Requeſt among us; and we look on high Living in its proper Light, as a matter of meer tranſient Curioſity, the Gratification of which, tho innocent, while unfrequent, becomes extremely culpable when it degenerates into Habit.

SUCH appears, in general, the Diſpoſition of our Country-men in theſe Reſpects; from which one need not even exclude Perſons of ſuperior Rank, who (no Doubt with Exceptions) are very far from being ſunk into that effeminate Fondneſs

Fondneſs for Culinary Niceties for which the Nobility and faſhionable Claſſes in other Countries are ſo peculiarly noted.

THIS laudable preference to Simplicity in theſe Matters, is of more Conſequence than a ſhallow Perception may apprehend: as it not only contributes to the Health and Strength of our Bodies, but by inuring Nature to be ſatisfied with, and to conſult Wholeſomeneſs rather than Delicacy, it prompts Men, in purſuance of this ſalutary Practice, to be careful in providing an Abundance of what is neceſſary, and to pay but a ſmall Attention to Superfluities.

THIS national Quality did not eſcape Monteſquieu. That profound Inveſtigator of Men and Things (in his Review of our Principles and Manners) does not diſdain to caſt an Eye of Applauſe on that part of our Wiſdom; and to give it the ſignificant and forcible Appellation of *Luxe Solide* a ſolid Luxury; a Luxury flowing from the Dictates of good Senſe, founded on the Utility reſulting to the Public

Public from an Abſtinence of needleſs, unmanly Refinements in the Modes of Nouriſhment; and which, in oppoſition to that which has uſurped and diſgraced the Name, doubles in a Manner, the Productions of Nature, by uſing them without Wantonneſs and Diſſipation; while the other, on the contrary, leſſens them by Waſte and Profuſion, and through the miſuſe of Plenty is often the Parent of Want.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

THO Cleanlineſs be certainly a Virtue peculiar to the Engliſh (for the Dutch can only be accounted cleanly in their Houſes, while they neglect their Perſons to a very reprehenſible Degree) yet there are not ſuch frequent Objects of Nauſeouſneſs in the ſtreets of Paris as in thoſe of London; owing to the leſs Propenſity of the Rabble to indulge in Liquor; and to the more laudable Cuſtom of ſaving, for the Purpoſes of Rayment, that money which is by ours conſumed in Gluttony. In theſe Reſpects the Populace in that city are indiſputably preferable to that of our Metropolis.

WHILE even the meaneſt of the loweſt Claſſes among the French are thus

thus attentive to the Appearance of their Perſons, we need not be ſurpriſed that their Betters are ſo ſtudiouſly taken up with the ſame Object; which, in France, is evidently viewed in a Light of much higher Importance than elſe-where; ariſing from the ſtrange abſurd Deſire moſt Individuals are tormented with to figure above their Condition.

THIS is a Foible that glaringly ſtigmatiſes the French Nation: neither can it be denied that of late years we have experienced a Tincture of the ſame Infatuation; tho not, indeed, proportionably to that ſo univerſally current in France; where many affect to be, and ſome almoſt believe themſelves, of a Conſequence equal to their Appearance: which is often ſumptuous to a Degree of Ridicule hardly credible to thoſe who have not witneſſed it, when the mediocrity of the Situation in Life of ſuch as aſſume theſe Airs is taken, at the ſame Time, into Conſideration.

A FRENCH-

A FRENCHMAN, excluſive of his Extravagance in Apparel will, often carry his Vanity ſo far as to lay out almoſt all he is worth in Trinquets of the moſt expenſive Value, in order to make a Parade among his Acquaintance, and inculcate a Notion of the Proſperity of his Circumſtances. This, however, is an End it is amazing he ſhould endeavour to obtain by ſuch Means; the Practice being ſo frequent and ſtale that he ought to be fully appriſed a Cheat of this ſort will not paſs, and that Men always judging of others by themſelves, as he is ſurrounded by Practitioners in the ſame Arts, they know what to think of him by what they know of themſelves.

BUT the Truth is that in whatever Condition Fortune may have placed many a Frenchman, he will contrive, unleſs he is very low indeed, to find Ways and Means to render her Frowns in ſome meaſure ineffectual; and by making a Glitter in his Dreſs, and affecting a Conciousneſs of Dignity in his Diſcourſe, he will, if not impoſe on Others, at leaſt deceive

deceive himſelf into a Perſuaſion that he is a ſubject of Eſteem and Attention and Reſpect wherever he goes.

HENCE that Boldneſs with which he intrudes on Company; that Effrontery with which he invades every Province of Diſcourſe; that Temerity which is perpetually ingaging him in ſcenes from which his only Harveſt is at beſt Ridicule, and often Ignominy; that Impertinence which, in ſpite of the viſible Scantineſs of his Means, hurries him into Diſſertations on the Multiplicity of his Expences; that Inſolence which impells him to Pretences of Connection with thoſe from whoſe Acquaintance and Society his Inſignificancy is an evident Preclufion; but whom his Words are audacious enough to ſuppoſe his Companions and with whoſe abſent Perſons he denies himſelf no manner of Familiarities.

SUCH Characters, however, are ſo well known that their Petulance is noways regarded; and like Animals whoſe Venom is not dangerous, there is no Miſ-

Miſchief attending their Intercourſe. They are heard with Indifference; looked upon without Reſpect; ſpoken of with Slight; and treated every where as Objects of Deriſion. In the mean Time their Career ſuffers no Interruption: happy within, they defy all Contempt from without, and reſolutely perſiſt in outfacing all the Sneers of the World, and overcoming every Proof of their Deſpicableneſs.

THERE is an Inſenſibility in this Sort of People that ſteels them againſt all Reproof, and makes it almoſt impoſſible to abaſh them, however conſiderable or potent their Antagoniſts, or their Arguments may be. Detect them in Falſehoods; expoſe their Arrogance; convict them of Meanneſs; in ſhort, lay them out in their trueſt Colours, it is Labour loſt: they will brave one out of the firmeſt and beſt ſupported Aſſertions, and in a manner, confute the cleareſt Evidence againſt them.

AFTER

AFTER having repreſented a Species of Beings very common among the French, it cannot be diſſembled that they have Imitators in other Nations, and not a few among us: but ſtill neither in ſuch Numbers nor any ways comparable to them for Adroitneſs in the Occupation they have aſſumed.

THERE is, on the other hand, a large Body of Individuals in France, who are a very remarkable Contraſt to the former; and who, inſtead of affecting any Airs of Conſequence, are ever lamenting the Injuſtice of their Deſtiny.

Many of them are Perſons of real Worth in moſt reſpects, and deficient only in Happineſs of Circumſtances; a Deficiency which People of undelicate Feelings too readily deem the more unpardonable for being found in a Man of Senſe; who, from the ſuperior Capacity he poſſeſſes to prevent or extricate himſelf from Difficulties, ſeems, in their groſs Apprehenſion of Things, leſs intitled to Commiſeration and Sympathy than one

who claims Aſſiſtance in virtue of his Inability to ſtruggle with them: as if Good-ſenſe alone were ſufficient to obviate Calamity.

MEN of this complaining Diſpoſition are numerous in France, from a Variety of Cauſes. The moſt uſual one is the too great Multitude of ſuch as receive a liberal Education; which neceſſarily elevates the Spirit of a Man, and often lifts it above the Level of his Fortune. Thus, when Youth is ſpent, and the Seaſon of Study is over, Men of Genius are naturally ſeeking for Opportunities to reap the Fruits of their paſt Application, and to exerciſe thoſe Talents they have been ſo long cultivating. But when fatal Experience convinces them that Capacity without Intereſt makes but a ſmall Progreſs, and that unleſs they can ſubmit to a total Recommencement of Life, on a new Plan, their Hopes of ſucceeding in the World have a very ſlight Foundation, it is not wonderful that many of them ſhould loſe Courage; and rather than undergo ſo painful a Renovation of them

themſelves, be content, however unprofitable and irkſome the Taſk may prove, to ſit down patiently under the Preſſures of Indigence, and to wait, with Reſignation to preſent Hardſhips, for one of thoſe extraordinary Turns of good Luck that will ſometimes happen in the Lottery of Life when we leaſt expect them.

SUCH a Situation is truly moſt melancholy, and only to be born by a philoſophic Diſpoſition that can face all the Shocks and Perplexities of Want and Diſtreſs, through the Strength of Reflexion on the Number of thoſe who ſhare it with themſelves, and yet, much leſs from Reaſon than Habit, ſuffer little or no Inconvenience from it.

WERE it not for Contemplations of this Caſt, Men of Parts, oppreſt by the Severity of Fate, would be the moſt miſerable of Beings. But as the School of Adverſity teaches a Variety of uſeful Leſſons, they who have been trained in it reap this greateſt of all Advantages, that of ſuiting themſelves to the Humour of

Fortune, and never falling into Weakneſs and Deſpondency.

Too many are thoſe, not only in France, but elſewhere, whom this Deſcription tallies with. What chiefly aggravates the Miſery of ſuch a Condition and renders it completely deplorable, is that the more they are conſcious of their Worthineſs to be ſtationed on a more conſpicuous Liſt in Society, the leſs they will condeſcend to embrace thoſe baſe Offers that wealthy Pride ſo bitterly cenſures them for refuſing; and which too generally prove, at laſt, the only Means left them to keep themſelves above Water, and to emerge from thoſe Extremities which one might naturally enough preſume that great Abilities were never deſigned nor liable to taſte of; but of which, for the Reaſons enumerated, no Mortals ſeem predeſtined to undergo more frequent and more mortifying Trials than thoſe preciſely whoſe Talents are avowedly of the primeſt Magnitude.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

ONE of the moſt characteriſtical Diſparities between the Engliſh and the French, is the Manner in which the Spirit of national Pride operates upon the Minds of Individuals in either Country.

THIS Paſſion, deeply rooted as it is in the Breaſt of Men, aſſumes very various and different Appearances as the Nature and Diſpoſition of the People whom it influences happen to be diſſimilar.

HENCE we find that however Fame, the chief Baſis and Origin of Pride, is equally thirſted for by all Nations, the Means employed to acquire it are very far from being invariably the ſame every where.

THUS the French look with more Complacency on ſeveral of thoſe Mediums that procure it than the Engliſh do; and theſe, on the other Hand, behold with Contempt many of thoſe Meaſures which the former purſue in order to become Objects of Admiration and Applauſe.

AN Elucidation of what is here obſerved muſt have frequently occured to ſuch as have been perſonally converſant among the French, or have attentively peruſed the Accounts relating to them; as they muſt have readily percieved that in that great, infallible Criterion of a People's public Character, the political Principles they profeſs (whoſe Influence is ſo well known to govern with capital Energy, their national Purſuits and Ardour for Praiſe and Renown) the Engliſh and French univerſally differ from each other in every eſſential Reſpect.

A Frenchman's Method of eſtabliſhing his Country's Title to ſuperior Merit, is by expatiating on the Grandor of his Monarch; his uncontroulable Dominion

his

his irreſiſtible Will; to obey and ſubmit to which, in its moſt extenſive Latitude, is not leſs his Pleaſure than his Glory.

AN Engliſhman, on the contrary, cites his own Liberty; the Certainty of his Poſſeſſions; his Defiance of Tyranny; to detect the Schemes of which, and to puniſh the Inſtruments of Oppreſſion, he accounts as much his Duty as his Intereſt: and ſpeaks of his Sovereign, not as of a Maſter whoſe Commands he is to execute without Examination or Delay, but as of a Magiſtrate equally bound with the meaneſt of his Subjects, to obſerve thoſe Laws in the framing whereof their Concurrence is deemed as neceſſary as his own; and under the ſame Obligation to reſpect their Priviledges, as they are to teſtify their Loyalty by readily conforming to thoſe Injunctions which inforce a legal Obedience to the Crown in the Departments committed to its Charge.

SUCH is the Reply an Engliſhman is apt to make; not forgetting, at the

ſame Time, to accompany it with Taunts and Sneers at the Servility and lowminded Submiſſion of his Adverſaries to the Rod of Deſpotiſm, which reduces human Nature to the Level of meer Animals by depriving them of their native Right of Reaſoning, and by extorting Obedience from them only through Violence and Compulſion.

THE principal Argument adduced by the French in Diſputes of this Nature, in Support of their Countrymen's ſuperior Worth, is their inviolable Attachment and Fidelity to the Perſons of their Kings, and the unabated Reverence they have always preſerved, even for ſuch as were not guiltleſs of tranſgreſſing the Bounds of Mildneſs and Moderation in their Government.

THIS they eſteem an unanſwerable Proof of their national Diſcretion and Humanity; as by forbearing to give Vent to their juſt Reſentments on ſuch Occaſions, they affirm they have prevented Conſequences that would have made the Remedy worſe than the Diſeaſe.

WITHOUT

WITHOUT determining the Merits of this Aſſertion, ſuffice it to ſay the French are fully perſuaded of its Rectitude; and, in purſuance of this Conviction, are always ready to enter into the moſt elaborate Diſcuſſion of the Diſparity of Conduct the Engliſh are ſo noted for on ſuch Emergencies: A Diſparity that evinces, in their opinion, beyond a Poſſibility of Refutation, the Inferiority of our national Honour and Character, in Compariſon to their own.

HENCE they are ſo warm and impetuous in the Allegation of thoſe Paſſages in our Hiſtory that are ſo well known abroad, and ſo much inſiſted on by thoſe who have (as moſt Foreigners have) but a very limited knowledge of our Conſtitution; and who entertaining no Idea of the Lawfulneſs of any Reſiſtance from Subjects to their Rulers, therefore condemn, without Heſitation, the ſucceſsful Struggles of our Anceſtors for their Freedom.

WHATEVER

WHATEVER the Suggeſtions of Prejudice or Malevolence may be to the Diſhonour of the Engliſh Nation, there is but one Paſſage at which their Indignation, as well as our own, is reaſonably excited, the barbarous, unjuſtifiable Treatment of our unfortunate Charles the firſt: a Prince whoſe Memory is peculiarly in veneration among the French, and whoſe Virtues and good Qualities they are zealous in extolling, not ſo much, perhaps, from a ſincere Eſteem and Regard for his Character, as in order to inhance the Odium they ſtrive, more than any other People, to load us with on account of his tragical End.

IT is particularly on this occaſion the French ſeem to triumph; and exalt themſelves, in their Imaginations, highly above the ferocious Inhabitants of a Country who could imbrue their Hands in the Blood of their Sovereign: for this is the conſtant Stile they uſe whenever they mention that fatal Event, from their Ignorance, real or affected, of the hiſtorical Truth of that melancholy

melancholy Tranſaction; with which whoever is well acquainted, will no more tax the collective Body of this Nation with the Ignominy of having authoriſed or even abetted it, than they will brand the national Character of a People with Cruelty for having, at any Period, been involved in the moſt irreconcilable and ſanguinary Factions, of which a Country may occaſionally become the Prey, without loſing that Fund of Humanity whereon its general Reputation may have been principally founded, and of which no modern Nation furniſhes more deplorable Inſtances than the French themſelves.

BUT theſe Diſtinctions are not attended to by the Majority of Mankind, who view Things too much in the Groſs, and are either unable or unwilling to arrive at that diſcriminate Information which alone can ſet them in their proper Light.

THUS as that Tragedy was perpetrated in England, Engliſhmen muſt bear

bear the Blame and the Infamy of it, and are, therefore, undiſtinguiſhingly accuſed by the French, of being reſtleſs, diſcontented, rebellious, and full of ill Humours even in the beſt of Times.

THESE Reproaches, ſometimes not altogether groundleſs, are, however, carried to a Length exceeding all Truth; and yet on their ſuppoſed Veracity are founded thoſe Pretenſions to a greater Dignity of national Character the French are ſo warm in maintaining: as they deem the Reverſe of our Behaviour (which they aſſert their own is in every Reſpect) to be the righteous, equitable Standard of a Nation's Conduct towards its Governors.

THE Sum of theſe Altercations is that We deſpiſe them as Slaves; and They, in return, affirm that we are little better than wild, untamable Savages; ready, at the leaſt Provocation, to ſubvert the very Foundations of Government: to liſt with the moſt outragious Impetuoſity

tuoſity under the Banner of Sedition; to trample on every Maxim of Concord and Lenity, and ruſh headlong to thoſe Extremities that are more terrible and inſupportable than the worſt Condition of Slavery.

SUCH is the Sentence a French Tribunal paſſes on Engliſhmen; who, on their Part, are not leſs violent in accuſing their Obſervations of Weakneſs and Futility; and tho willing to make Conceſſions as to the Illegality of ſome Proceedings, yet are proud of the general Oppoſition which the Attempts to eſtabliſh unlimited Power have ſo conſpicuouſly met with in this Iſland; and derive as much Honour from it, in their own Apprehenſions, as Prejudice and Want of due Information in preſumptuous Strangers, would aſcribe to them of Infamy in the Methods purſued in order to obtain and ſecure that ſalutary End.

THUS we ſee that what is the Boaſt of one Nation, is by the other reputed

puted a Cauſe of Shame; and that Deeds, on the one ſide, adjudged noble and meritorious are, on the other, viewed with Contempt and Deteſtation.

THIS Subject it was thought neceſſary the rather to inlarge upon, becauſe the French, in the Height of their Zeal for the Glory of their Country, are ſtrangely prone to make an immeaſurable Parade of their Loyalty, and to repreſent ours in the moſt diſadvantagious Light. And becauſe, at the ſame Time, it is preſumed not a more powerful Inſtance can be produced in how different a Channel the chief Pride of each Nation flows, than by ſtating the reſpective Arguments urged on either ſide as Proofs of Supereminence; Arguments that forcibly demonſtrate how wide a Diſparity, even in Matters of the moſt immediate and continual Importance to the Welfare of Mankind, the Habits contracted by Education are able to imprint in the Minds of Men: while ſome can fix the blackeſt Stain of Defamation on a way of Thinking

which

which others hold in the higheſt Eſteem, and pronounce the only true Syſtem of Senſe and Propriety.

CHAP. XXXI.

AN Obſervation naturally reſulting from what has been premiſed, is that the Engliſh and the French commencing their Diſſentions, as it were, at the Fountain Head, we are not to wonder they ſhould continue them with ſuch unremitting Steadineſs in the Courſe of every Thing that relates to the Public.

THIS national Pride produces a Spirit of Antipathy that animates the whole Body of eitherPeople, from the higheſt to the loweſt Denominations; and equally breaks forth on the ſmalleſt as well as on the greateſt Emergencies.

HENCE

HENCE both Parties are reſtleſs in their Animoſities; and like Armies preparing for the Day of Battle, are inceſſantly buſied in detecting the weak ſide of the Enemy, and making the moſt of every trifling Advantage over them.

THE Conſequence is that no Quarter is given, and that the Chapter of reciprocal Accuſations is an ample one; where not only real Failings and Vices are moſt carefully inregiſtered, but even ſuch as are purely imaginary: and the moſt ſiniſter Conſtructions paſt on Actions that often are commendable.

THUS, whether in Affairs of Peace or of War; whether of a public or of a private Nature, this national Pride not ſeldom degenerates into the rankeſt Malice, and magnifies or diminiſhes without Mercy, the good or evil Qualities of either People. Hence thoſe groundleſs, unjuſt Sarcaſms ſo illnaturedly deviſed and ſo illiberally applied. Hence that Petulance of Diſpoſition which condemns unheard, unexamined, and almoſt unknown

unknown, Things and Perſons worthy of Approbation and Reſpect.

IT were a diſagreable Taſk to revolve the many Inſtances that could be produced in ſupport of thoſe Allegations, and it is a ſtill more painful Reflexion that we need not ſeek for them in the Dregs of either Nation (where one might moſt naturally expect to find them) but among thoſe who ought to be and are, indeed, better appriſed; yet, hurried away by the Torrent of contagious Prejudice, are willing to humour the Croud, or affraid to ſtem its Fury.

FROM theſe equally ſhameful and iniquitous Motives it happens that, both in England and in France, we are ſo frequently witneſſes of the moſt flagrant Impoſitions on the Belief of the credulous and uninformed: Impoſitions calculated to repreſent the rival Nations in the moſt deſpicable Light that Words can effect.

EXAMPLES of this mutual Depravity are but too common at London, and at Paris: where, either through Wantonneſs or an abſurd Hatred, no ſmall Pains are taken by many (chiefly among thoſe miſchievous Sets of People who, for Want of Occupation, infeſt the Coffee Houſes and other Places of public Reſort) to inflame, by defamatory Reports, the Minds of their Countrymen, and thereby cut aſunder, as far as in them lies, thoſe Bonds of Harmony, Friendlineſs, and good Fellowſhip which the Politics of neither Country forbid their reſpective Individuals to form: but which are often prevented, and as often broken, by theſe Incendiaries; who ſeem to rejoice no leſs when they can diſturb the Unanimity of private Intercourſe, than when their Wiſhes of public Enmity are gratified by thoſe many Ruptures the bloody Sequels of which ought, one would think, to alarm and intereſt Humanity much more than they generally ſeem to do: and to teach both Sides that however Emulation is a Virtue and a Happineſs, it ceaſes to be either

either the Moment it impells us to carry our Competition into the Field of Death, and to erect our Trophies on the Deſtruction of our Antagoniſts.

UNPREJUDICED, reflecting, People are ſtruck with no unreaſonable Surpriſe when they find with what Readineſs Mankind is apt to embrace Opinions that tend ſo directly and effectually to alienate them from each other. But Impartiality is an Acquiſition obtained by very few. It is a Salary earned by a laborious Attention to the Merit of others, as well as to our own; which is rather an irkſome, unpleaſant Taſk to the generality of Men: who, as they delight in contemplating, as it were excluſively, their own Perfections, cannot be ſuppoſed deſirous of diſcovering aught of ſuperior Excellence in others.

IT is not, therefore, any ways amazing that the Inhabitants of all Countries ſhould hearken ſo eagerly to thoſe Accounts that debaſe the Character of their

Neighbours; the Depreſſion of whom is a grateful Sacrifice to the Vanity of each in particular, by the Share he claims in the fancied Exaltation thence accruing to his Countrymen.

To theſe Cauſes it is owing that ſo many, both Engliſh and French, ſwallow with the moſt ſcandalous Avidity, the groſſeſt Improbabilities that Prejudice, Rancour, or Levity can ſuggeſt: and, inſtead of endeavouring (as by the Laws of Humanity bound) to leſſen that Hoſtility of Temper which a State of perpetual Miſtruſt in our political Tranſactions muſt too naturally give riſe to, labour, in a manner, to widen the Breach, and to render all Communication diſguſting, by repreſenting a Malevolence of Deſign as reciprocally inherent in each other's Schemes and Enterprizes, whatever Face or Appellation they may aſſume.

NUMEROUS Proofs of this deſpicable kind of Enmity, which both Parties are equally guilty of, might be ſpecified

cified; but it were an ungrateful Taſk to recapitulate thoſe illiberal, diſgraceful Invectives that ſoil the Pages of the many Writers in both Nations who have dealt ſo roundly in Suppoſitions, and advanced, without any Senſe of Remorſe and Shame, the moſt groundleſs and ſtupid Notions.

THE Errors, Faults, and Vices incident to the Character of a People, ought, indeed, never to be ſpared; as the Concealment or Extenuation of them deprives the World of the Right it has to learn what is ridiculous, wrong, or wicked; through a proper Expoſition of ſuch Objects as, from their Publicity, will undoubtedly claim the more univerſal Attention.

For this Reaſon national Defects ought to be depicted in their fulleſt Colours, and brought to the openeſt Light. But in the Career of Cenſure a candid Critic will remember not to condemn without Proof of Guilt, nor unleſs the Offence be manifeſt, and beyond the Power of

Contradiction; and will, therefore, adhere to that fundamental Maxim of all equitable Judges, not to confide in his Penetration alone, but to call in the Aſſiſtance of others, the true and only Method to be obſerved in Diſquiſitions of this Nature; wherein whoever proceeds on no other Evidence than that limited one reſulting from his own perſonal Experience, may rightly be accuſed of giving his Verdict a very precarious Foundation: as, notwithſtanding this Rule may hold good as far as it relates to the Characters of Individuals, it cannot be admitted of ſufficient Weight where ſuch Numbers are concerned as compoſe the Body of a Nation.

In ſuch a Caſe a Number of Examiners, proportionable to the Populouſneſs of it is alſo required; from whoſe concurrent Obſervations only we are intitled to pronounce any Judgment on its Virtues and Demerits with tolerable Certainty.

NOT, however, that they ſhould be denied their due Share of Commendation who having viſited various Countries, have laid before the World ſuch Repreſentations of their Inhabitants as ſeemed to them conſiſtent with Truth, tho without ſupporting their Aſſertions by any collateral Authorities, and relying purely on ſuch Experiments as may have occurred to them in the Courſe of their Travels and Inveſtigations of Men and Things.

MANY of theſe are, unqueſtionably, deſerving of the higheſt Regard; but ſtill we ſhould be peculiarly cautious never to permit Credulity to gain Ground; which it will unavoidably do if we neglect to compare their divers Relations, and to weigh the different Opportunities they had of acquiring Knowledge and receiving Information, according to their reſpective Talents and Condition.

BUT what we ſhould principally never loſe Sight of, in the midſt of thoſe Liberties which the moſt guarded and diſ-

creet among them, in other Reſpects, are ſo little averſe to abſtain from (in deſcribing and characteriſing with ſo much Freedom and Latitude, the Tranſactions and Perſons that have fallen under their Cognizance) is that if, however acute and ſagacious a Man may be, he is not impowered to decide, by his ſole Opinion, of what paſſes within that almoſt impenetrable Sanctuary the Mind even of one Perſon, nor by what Motives it is uſually actuated, without the previous Medium of a moſt intimate Acquaintance, much leſs is he qualified to pronounce definitively concerning the Sentiments and Diſpoſitions of ſo many Thouſands with whom he is unconnected. We ought, therefore, to be extremely cautious not to indulge a precipitate Perſuaſion of the Reality of the many Portraits of Individuals, and Pictures of a whole People, drawn with ſo much apparent Accuracy by the Pens of ſome Travellers, who have evidently thought to prove the Depth of their Capacity by truſting entirely to their own private Judgment

and

and Perception; who have ſought to be eloquent rather than judicious, and were altogether much more intent to pleaſe than to inſtruct. An Eaſineſs of Faith in ſuch Matters is inconſiſtent with that Warineſs and Circumſpection with which any Account ſhould be attended to untill a Confrontation of neceſſary Witneſſes concurs in eſtabliſhing its Credit.

SUCH Reflexions might obviate that ungenerous Propenſity evident in Numbers of our Countrymen, to liſten with an almoſt implicit Belief, to the many unfavorable Reports, and to devour, with the readieſt Conviction of their Veracity, the moſt injurious Deſcriptions, not only of the French, but of every other Nation.

FOES as the Engliſh and the French are, from the Nature of their Government, the Situation of their reſpective Countries, and from other obvious Cauſes, ſtill we may, and therefore ought to, reconcile publick Rivalſhip with private Concord.

THERE

THERE are ſo many amiable Qualities in both Nations, that it is a Pity their political Inveteracy ſhould affect their Conduct ſo far as to involve them in a total Oblivion of each other's Worth; that it ſhould ſuſpend the mutual Uſe of every beneficial Ability, and urge them on to the Exertion of thoſe alone that are ſubſervient to the Purpoſes of reciprocal Miſchief and Deſtruction.

CHAP

CHAP. XXXII.

SOME of our Countrymen, hurried into Indignation on obſerving the profound Submiſſiveneſs with which the French ſeem, in general, to bear the heavy Yoke of Bondage, have pronounced them, like the Cappadocians of old, unworthy of ſo noble a Bleſſing as that of Liberty, and perfectly adapted to the Condition of Slaves.

BUT Humanity interpoſes, and forbids the paſſing ſo ſevere a Sentence on any People. The Cauſes that have effected the unhappy Diſparity between the political Circumſtances of the Engliſh and the French, are ſuch as will equally operate in all Nations, Inattention to the Deſigns of thoſe who firſt began to incroach

croach on the Rights of the People, or, perhaps, a Forbearance to oppoſe them with Vigour, from a Notion that they would be attended by no bad Conſequences, and were only temporary Evils that would ceaſe of themſelves.

To this Paſſiveneſs of Diſpoſition we are chiefly to attribute the Loſs of Liberty in France; not forgetting, however, ſundry other no leſs efficient Cauſes; ſuch as an abſurd Contempt of the inferior Claſſes, accompanied with the moſt profligate Venality among the Great, and equally ſenſeleſs Diſſentions among the former: whoſe Want of Unanimity incouraged and enabled their Superiors to betray their Liberties into the Hands of Tiranny; without foreſeeing that their own muſt, of conſequence, partake of the ſame Fate; as Freedom is a Prize which, in order to be enjoyed with Safety, ought to be ſhared in common, and not partially reſtricted to any peculiar Claſs; no one Part of the Community, unaſſiſted and unſupported by the other, being

being able to ſecure the Poſſeſſion of Priviledges it has no other Right to claim than as a Property of the Public.

WARNED by the dreadful Example which France now lays before us, it is hoped that we may learn how to beware of thoſe Rocks whereon its former Freedom was wrecked. In the mean Time it is our Duty as Men, rather to ſympathiſe with the Misfortune of the French, than to inſult over them for having incurred it. One may even add that, as Members of the great Family of Mankind, we ſhould diveſt ourſelves of all thoſe narrow Prepoſſeſſions that are the Scandal of moſt Nations; and nobly wiſh that the French may extricate themſelves from their preſent ſlaviſh Situation. There is certainly no Impropriety in this Deſire, the Accompliſhment of which would in no-wiſe prove detrimental to the Happineſs of Britain. The Poſſeſſion of Liberty naturally chears the Mind, and elevates us to a Degree of Magnanimity that ſcorns to

contri-

contribute to the Calamity of others. Deſpotiſm, on the contrary, ſours and irritates thoſe who are ſubject to it, and impells them to that Baſeneſs of Soul that rejoices in a Diffuſion of Miſery.

It were, at the ſame Time, unjuſt to undervalue the French for an Accident that befell the Greeks and Romans before them, and which we ourſelves have not unfrequently been very near experiencing within this Century and a half; to ſay nothing of the Tyranny once exerciſed over our Anceſtors. Diſcord and Corruption were the Sources of thoſe Evils; a trite Obſervation, but ſo commonly forgotten or rather unattended to, that it cannot too often be repeated.

When either of theſe gains Footing in a Country, it is alone ſufficient to work its total Subverſion in a ſhort Space. Like a Plague or epidemical Diſtemper, which is always ſevereſt in the

the moſt ſtrong and robuſt, it rages with a Fierceneſs and Violence proportionate to the Talents of thoſe whom it perverts; which become, in ſuch a Caſe, as deſtructive a Nuſance to the Publick, as, in others they prove its Safety and Protection.

HENCE, the Nations that have had the greateſt Reaſon to lament their inteſtine Broils, are thoſe where the Heads and Leaders of the oppoſite Factions were Men of eminent Capacity; a Truth deplorably verified in the moſt renowned States of Antiquity; nor leſs authenticated by modern Inſtances.

THUS through a Perverſion and Proſtitution of the moſt ſplendid Abilities, England has often been on the Brink of, and its Rival France has at laſt fallen into that political Ruin which, tho it annihilates not the Name, nor the Exiſtence of a People, ſuffers them no longer to exiſt for themſelves, nor to act in their national Capacity.

SUCH

SUCH, indeed, is not only the Situation of the French, but that of far the greater Part of Europe; where the Inhabitants are now, through long Preſcription, accuſtomed to and almoſt eaſy under, the moſt ignominious Oppreſſion; where the Ideas of that original Equality which ought to preſide in the Inſtitution of all civil Ordinances, are, in a manner, effaced by that Abjectneſs of Spirit with which the Will and Pleaſure of Sovereigns are conſidered as the Standard of Propriety; and what is ſtill worſe, as it tends more directly to perpetuate theſe Enormities, where the military Inforcement of all Meaſures, juſt or illegal, by introducing that Obedience which proceeds from Fear, has extinguiſhed all thoſe laudable Motives for a Conformity to the Injunctions of Government, that render Compliance meritorious; an Epithet it never can deſerve unleſs it proceeds from a Conviction of its Conſiſtency with Reaſon.

BUT this is a Praiſe applicable to a free People only; among whom real, genuine Virtue, both publick and private, bids fair-

faireſt, of courſe, to flouriſh moſt. Nothing can challenge that ſacred Name while influenced by Dread and Puſillanimity, which are avowedly the ruling Principle in all arbitrary States. Notwithſtanding they may ſometimes boaſt much Regularity of Lives and Manners, and always the prompteſt Submiſſion to Authority, yet, as this flows from Compulſion, ſo the other is produced by the ſpiritleſs Apprehenſion of giving Offence to their Superiors. It is in a Land of Liberty alone that Men dare appear what they are. Hence, when their Conduct is blameleſs in the moral Departments of Life, there is no more need to aſcribe it to a Servility of Temper, than to attribute the Reverence of their Rulers, and the Willingneſs to applaud and execute their Deſigns, to any other Motive than a Perſuaſion of the Uprightneſs and Capacity of the firſt, and the Rectitude and Utility of the laſt.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.